

LISTEN UP! THE NEW GOLDEN AGE OF RADIO

Reader's



digest

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OF
GREAT
READING



FROZEN

BACK *TO*

LIFE

HOW EXTREME MEDICINE
IS SAVING PATIENTS



HIDDEN
DANGERS
OF
EATING
LATE

POLICE
DOG
DOWN!

WOMAN
WITH
SUPER
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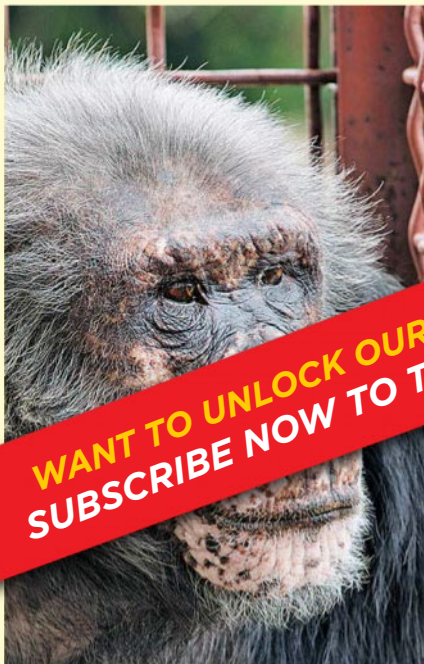
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Letters

READERS' COMMENTS AND OPINIONS

A Place on Earth

I truly enjoyed reading "Give the Earth a Chance" (May). It seemed to uplift my spirit. Germaine Greer's love for the land is what is greatly needed.

LUCY FOSTER

"Give the Earth a Chance" is a powerful and confronting article. Not only does Germaine Greer highlight the devastation we've brought to our planet but she wonderfully describes what she and others are doing to rectify it.



Let's all be encouraged to do our small part too. We can make a difference!

EULALIE HOLMAN, *Mitcham, Vic*

First-Aid Mistakes That Could Be Dangerous

When I teach first aid and CPR classes (Digest Health: "Avoiding First Aid Mistakes", May), I always stress the point about making sure it's easy for an emergency team to find you. People often don't want to make a scene in public. Choking in a restaurant? Don't run to the bathroom. And if you see someone leave the room who may be choking, follow him or her.

T.R-P, *via Facebook*

Chasing Happiness

Thanks for the uplifting, inspiring and thought-provoking stories in the May

issue. You touched on two subjects close to my heart, reincarnation, ("The Children Who Have Lived Before"), and the ridiculous pursuit of happiness ("Happiness: Is It All It's Cracked Up To Be?"). My favourite saying is one from Meher Baba, an Indian spiritual leader who passed away in 1969: "Happiness lies in making others happy." This is just what your articles recommend. You

LET US KNOW

If you are moved – or provoked – by any item in the magazine, share your thoughts. Turn to page 6 for how to join the discussion.

are making folk think instead of just muddling through life.

JENNIFER LAW, *Bargara Beach, Qld*

Have a Good Night

Your article "Sounding the Alarm on Sleep" (May) raised many important points. One that was not fully explored was the link between sleep and injury prevention. By enforcing a minimum sleep regimen of six hours a night, the Israeli Army was able to lower the stress fracture incidence by 60%, according to a 2008 study. Even more reason to get a good night's sleep.

STEPHEN BOURKE, *by email*

As a person who dealt with severe insomnia for over a decade, I hope that health professionals are learning how to help those who want to get enough sleep and cannot.

IRENE EGGERS



CAPTION CONTEST

Come up with the funniest caption for the above photo and you could win cash. To enter, see details on page 6.

PHOTOS: THINKSTOCK



You Called?

We asked you to think up a funny caption for this photo.

Hold on one moment please, caller.
I just need to put you on paws.

GAVIN SMITH

Having a ruff day at work?

ROLANDO RUIZ

I'm a terrier, not a Labrador receiver!

MICHAEL WOOLFORD, *Rosetta, Tas*

I'm barking mad, been on hold for ever.

DAVID JOWSEY

"Harold, you really need to get your hearing checked. I told you to give the dog a bone."

MICHAEL LUCAS, *Maroubra, NSW*

I keep fit with dogged determination.

BOB MARRIOTT

"It's a dog's life being a secreterriery."

SIVALINGUM THAYER

"Howl canine help you?"

TIM RAPHAEL TANGONAN

Cancel lunch with Rover ... flat out at the office!

LESLEY ELLIOTT, *Padstow, NSW*

Congratulations to this month's winner, Gavin Smith.

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Production Manager Balaji Parthasarathy
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ADVERTISING Group Advertising Director,
Asia Pacific Sheron White Advertising Sales
Manager Darlene Delaney

REGIONAL ADVERTISING CONTACTS

Asia Kahchi Liew, liew.kahchi@rd.com
Australia Darlene Delaney,
darlene.delaney@rd.com
New Zealand Debbie Bishop,
debbie@hawkhurst.co.nz
South Africa Michèle de Chastelain,
michele@iafrica.com

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President and Chief Executive Officer
Bonnie Kintzer
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International Brian Kennedy
Editor-in-Chief, International Magazines
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FOR DIGITAL EXTRAS AND
SOCIAL MEDIA LINKS, SEE PAGE 29.

Anecdotes and jokes

Send in your real-life laugh for
Life's Like That or All in a Day's
Work. Got a joke? Send it in for
Laughter is the Best Medicine!

Smart Animals

Share antics of unique pets or
wildlife in up to 300 words.

Kindness of Strangers

Share your moments of
generosity in 100–500 words.

My Story

Do you have an inspiring or
life-changing tale to tell?
Submissions must be true,
unpublished, original and
800–1000 words – see website
for more information.

Letters to the editor, caption competition and other reader submissions

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Editor's Note

Say the Magic Word

THE ELEGANT USE OF LANGUAGE is something I'm passionate about, and if you're reading Reader's Digest I reckon there's a fair chance it's something that matters to you too. We get more letters taking us to task for the use of a sloppy phrase, or a dodgy sentence structure than just about anything else. Whether we're plain wrong, can defend our "sins" or agree to disagree, it's always a hearty conversation among people who care about words and grammar in the service of smart communication.

As our chief subeditor can't help but mention in her Living Language column this issue (page 80), I find it difficult to contain my *tskk tsks* every time I hear or see a *less* when it should (according to my dear old rules) be *fewer*. And I cheer when pretty and precise words that have fallen out of common use, such as *egregious* and *mellifluous* are given a second chance.

I trace my foibles back to an idiosyncratic English teacher at college, whose personal lexical line in the sand was *vital*. Any student who used the term to mean anything other than "consisting in, constituted by, that immaterial force or principle which is present in living beings or organisms" (thank you, *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*) was immediately marked down. Not just by a point or two, but dropped a whole grade.

As arbitrary as it seemed at the time, it taught me that the English language often has exactly the word for the moment you're trying to describe, it just needs finding – and that's where the fun lies.

Do you have a favourite word, or a new standard that leaves you grimacing? I'd love to hear from you – see the page opposite for how to share your language loves and loathes.



Telling Stories

Here at RD, we all enjoy reading a great story, particularly one that relates to our own personal experiences

What's not to love about the Wizard of Oz? My favourite holiday souvenir is a snow globe that I was given by a friend who visited the Smithsonian Museum in Washington DC. It contains a magical (though very small) pair of ruby slippers. Those fancy court shoes have long held a special place in my heart. For me, this story is as much about a crazed woman set on getting back a pair of fabulous shoes – as it is about a young girl's dream. I'm sure you'll agree when you learn how much the treasured heels sold for at auction. Check out "We're Off to See the Wizard" on page 54.

LOUISE WATERSON, managing editor



As someone who has reflux disease but also sees a regular, late dinner – complete with wine and dessert – as the perfect antidote to a busy day, "The Danger Of Eating Late at Night" (page 84) is a timely reminder that my lifestyle really does need

to change. Dr Jamie Koufman offers no-nonsense advice that has motivated me to get started. I will now be making a concerted effort to eat properly throughout the day and cut out the bedtime sweets. How hard can it be?

VICKI POLZOT, editorial coordinator



I got deeply into podcasts while sharing the bottle-feeding duties when my son was a baby. Pacing the room at 2am, patting and cuddling, became a (nearly) effortless joy while listening to comedian Pete Holmes's show You Made It Weird through one earbud. Years later, the popularity of Serial ("How Murder Rescued the Radio Star", page 88) shows us this is a medium that's here to stay.

GREG BARTON, humour and digital editor

"First Timers" (page 66) reminded me of my first overseas adventure. My girlfriend and I flew to Cairo very late one night with two heavy suitcases. Not having booked a hotel we found ourselves struggling down deserted dark streets – sinister military policemen lurked in the shadows clutching machine guns.

A gleaming Mercedes pulled up beside us, and an immaculately dressed Arab stepped out. "Can I be of assistance?" he asked. He drove us to a hotel, booked us in, and came around the next morning and bought us breakfast. It was our first introduction to the famous Middle Eastern hospitality.

HUGH HANSON, art designer

As my wife reads a lot of murder mystery novels, I have known for some time that if I ever put a foot wrong she would know how to kill me, where to bury my body in a shallow

grave and then how to get away scot-free. After reading "Ian Rankin's Edinburgh" (page 104), I now understand her fascination with Rankin's novels and their portrayal of the rich culture Edinburgh has to offer. I'd love to visit the Scottish city and pop into the Oxford Pub to contemplate my continued good behaviour over a pint.

JOHN YATES, design director

Meeting Butch and Trevor through "A Cracker of a Dog" (page 72) has made me hugely respectful of a profession I knew little about. Sure I know that dogs and police work together but I hadn't thought too much about the bond between dogs and their handlers. I certainly hadn't realised their worth as a chance at a non-lethal solution to a threatening incident.

ELLEN WESSELING, executive assistant to the managing director

Do you have a favourite story in this issue? Write to us: details on page 6.

Coincidences happen in the most unlikely places, leaving our readers amazed and amused

Unexpected Friends

Flight Path

IN 1962, I met a wonderful South African man named Doug on an international flight. From then on, I saw him reasonably often as I was a flight attendant. We got engaged, but within six months I realised that it could not work. I knew I'd be unable to live the rest of my life in South Africa, as I could never be anything but an Australian resident. Oh, how we cried.

One Saturday morning in 1995, I dropped a friend off at Sydney International Airport. Who should cross my path but my former fiancé, passing through Sydney on his way back to South Africa. Oh, how we cried. The window of opportunity for this meeting was possibly ten seconds!

JUNE BRINKMAN

Dinner Circle

I INVITED TWO FRIENDS over for tea last year. I've known Marina for about 20 years, but I didn't meet Vienie until December 2013 and neither had met until I introduced them at this tea. My mother had been going through old



photos and had discovered some of a dinner party we held around the time I first met Marina, so I brought them out to show her. In one photo was a woman we knew at the time, but for some reason neither of us could remember who she was. As Marina and I pondered over the photo, Vienie came over to us and piped up, "Aah, that's Diane. I used to work with her!"

LAUREN JEAN KINGHORN, *via e-mail*

Street Meet

JUST OVER 30 years ago, my husband and I visited his aunt Ann in Arizona. "Oh, you must meet my neighbour, May. She's from Australia too!" said Ann, as she led me across the street to May's house on our first day there.

"Where are you from in Australia?" I asked May.

"Perth," she replied.

"Me too! Where in Perth?" I asked.

"Victoria Park" came May's response.

"Me too!" I repeated.

It transpired that May had been a very close friend of my grandmother. They had gone to school together and lived in the same street, but lost contact when May emigrated to America as a war bride. Unfortunately a reunion was not possible, as my grandmother was in a nursing home with Alzheimer's disease but May shared stories about my grand-

mother's youth that would otherwise have been lost.

CAROLE RUTTER

Cultural Exchange

BACK IN 1993 a group of international Rotarians visited New Zealand, with a few coming to our home town, Matamata. At a dinner meeting we briefly met Joao and his wife who were from Sao Paulo, Brazil.

In 1997, attending a Rotary Convention in Glasgow, Scotland, we were hailed by a man who shouted out "Matamata" in a loud voice. Yes, it was Joao from Sao Paulo.

This wasn't too unusual because these were Rotary functions. However, in 2002 we visited Brazil, and after our time there we stopped off in Orlando, Florida, for a few days. We decided to visit Universal Studios, and boarded a bus to take us there.

A few stops later two men got on and walked past us. I said to my husband, "That looked like the man from Brazil". He stood up in the aisle, turned to the men further back and called out "Brazil!" Sure enough the reply came back "Matamata". Here was Joao again.

These two men were at a photographic convention in Orlando. I am still amazed by the coincidence of these meetings nine years apart.

JOAN REED

Do you have a coincidence story to share? We'd love to hear it. Find our contact details on page 6.



Unbelievable

TRUE TALES TOLD TALL



Cuss Words for the Classy

Nury Vittachi prefers his profanities to be articulated in Latin

DARN! SHOOT! DAGNABBIT! English-speaking societies are running out of swear words. This is worrying. Scientists say curse terms are important because they evolved to alleviate physical and emotional pain. But the words lose their power now we live in a world where kindergartners greet each other with: “Good morning,

you [bleeping] [bleep].”

The other day I had to quote a bad word in a newspaper so I used the symbols @\$%^&. This is helpful because readers can insert a bad word according to their personal standards. My mild, religious family members read them as “bothersome” and clapped their hands over their shocked

ILLUSTRATION: ANDREW JOYNER

mouths. My work friends are at the other extreme – I had one editor who clearly dropped out of the womb with a bump and a scream of vile utterance.

But you know what? Some people should NEVER use bad words because it just sounds wrong. Take weather forecasters for example. “A [bleep]-load of rain fell this morning, and the humidity level will rise to a [bleep] of a lot by noon.” Just doesn’t work.

Of course, there are ways for Western societies to refresh their supply. For some reason known only to the Universe, the names of birds make satisfying curses: Lazy Cisticola, Tufted Titmouse, Brown Trembler, Paltry Tyrannulet, Yellow-Bellied Sapsucker, Rough-Faced Shag, Blue-Footed Booby, Spangled Drongo... you get the picture.

Another suggestion is to move beyond English. In the US TV show *Firefly*, actors used real swear words, but only in Mandarin and Cantonese. In Hindi, people insult each other by saying: “You are the hair growing on my flank area.” In Mandarin Chinese, people say, “You son of a rabbit.” (Sometimes you hear parents curse lazy children with this phrase without realising the irony.)

You can use European tongues for this purpose too. I had an Italian friend

who used to say “*Maladicta*” when I trod on his toes. It sounded very “swear-y” but just meant “bad word”.

Some years ago, I had to train a foul-mouthed newspaper reporter for a job on live radio. We wrote a list of words that sounded like curse words but were safe for broadcasting use and taped them to her microphone. The

top three most satisfying ones were Pool, Cow and Follicle. The next time something bad happens, try shouting, “POOL” at the top of your lungs. It works just as well as a naughty word.

If you want to be really classy, I recommend making all dramatic announcements in Latin. Here are some useful

phrases to get you started. At the bar: “*Di! Ecce hora! Uxor mea me necabit!*” (“Dear God, look at the time! My wife will kill me!”) On the street: “*Recedite, plebes! Gero rem imperialem!*” (“Stand aside plebians! I am on imperial business.”)

But if you really want to insult, skip the expletives. The most horrible curse in Latin is probably this one: “*Utinam logica falsa tuam philosophiam totam suffodiant.*” (“May faulty logic undermine your entire philosophy.”)

Ooh, now that’s nasty.

Nury Vittachi is a Hong Kong-based author. Read his blog at Mrjam.org

“

**Names of birds
make satisfying
curses ... Brown
Trembler,
Spangled
Drongo... you
get the picture**

Having a new baby is confusing enough, without trying to follow your mother's rules about poultry – and life

Chicken Soup for a New Mum

BY JANCY JOSEPH SAMYNADAN

Jancy, 31, lives in Perak, Malaysia, with her husband and 18-month-old son. A stay-at-home mum, she calls motherhood an enriching experience.

“YOU HAVE TO EAT ALL OF THEM. The rooster first. That bird is too noisy,” says my mother, as I stare at the brood of chickens clucking and scratching, in mute disbelief. Just three days earlier, I had given birth to a healthy 3.3kg baby boy after a gruelling 36 hours in labour. Now, I am staring at these chickens in the portable mini coop at my parents’ flat in Selangor, Malaysia, where my husband, Pratheep, and I are supposed to spend the next six weeks.

Ever since I was a little girl, I had fantasised about being a mother. The visions had always been of bliss as I imagined myself with my baby. Little did I know that I had just strapped myself in for the most challenging rollercoaster ride of my life. For starters, I had to observe a confinement period of 40 days, a custom that is still widely practised in a number of Asian communities where we adhere to certain rules pertaining to postpartum healing. One of the rules was that I had to be in a non-air-conditioned environment, with minimal fan contact. The problem was it was a scorching January and I was beyond uncomfortable. Mother also made me wear a sarong cloth bound tightly around my waist, which was supposed to get rid of postpartum flab. “Don’t waste money on binders,” she said dismissively. “They don’t work.”

My diet included huge portions of “kampong” (free range) chicken soup cooked with bitter herbs and spices. The thick broth, brewed over many hours, is meant to restore energy, and



it's a common belief in the Indian culture that the spices used in the soup can protect the body from infections. I wasn't convinced by the taste, though – which was a shame since I was expected to eat it twice a day. As the days went by and I listened to the clucking of an ever-decreasing number of chickens, my thoughts often turned to veganism.

The afternoons were spent sitting by a charcoal-lit fire prepared by my father, which burned with very pungent incense. It is believed that inhaling the smoke can kill bad germs while the heat is good for the body.

The days crept by, and so did the unceasing cycle of nappy changes, nursing, rocking and cuddling my little man. It became a lot to handle

and I felt overwhelmed. Pratheep, who is with the armed forces, had only limited paternity leave, much to my frustration. If I wasn't grumbling to him about Mother's seemingly absurd do's and don'ts, I was weepy.

I felt utterly helpless. Pratheep couldn't have been more empathetic but he, too, was struggling to get a grip on parenthood.

When I was about halfway through my confinement period, I mustered enough courage to seek Mother's permission to go to the hair salon. This particular rule of not venturing outside drove me to the brink of insanity. Mother was bewildered at my request but she relented when I promised to have two bowls of her

chicken soup for dinner. I felt a wave of relief as I embraced my freedom. But as I sat on the plush salon chair, waiting for the hairdresser, I was suddenly overcome with anxiety.

What if my son was awake? What if he was crying his heart out for his mummy? I rose abruptly, muttered my apologies and left. When I got home, my father glanced at me, saw the state of my hair, and mumbled in disapproval about how hair salons did such a bad job nowadays yet we still had to pay for the service.

I hurried to my son's crib, only to find him sleeping serenely. Overwhelmed, I crumpled into quiet sobs. Motherhood wasn't supposed to be like this. Why was I not enjoying it?

Days later, I was adjusting my sarong when Mother came in with a pile of folded nappies. I thanked her and waited for her to leave. Instead, she sat on the bed and beckoned me next to her.

"Honey, the early days are usually the lousiest," she said. "Everything will seem out of control. But don't worry, they are all hormones. You should feel better soon."

Her words felt like a cool drop of water on a parched tongue. "Is it normal to feel so helpless all the time? Do all women go through it?" I asked.

"Dear, you have just given birth to a new life to care for and love. Of course it is tough. Your body is trying to work it out and so will your heart and mind. If it spirals out of control,

you will need help. In the meantime, don't be too hard on yourself," she said, reassuringly.

I hung on to her words. I began embracing motherhood and things took a turn for the better. I felt a huge sense of accomplishment the first time I managed to soothe my crying baby without Mother's aid.

Much to my delight, the confinement days eventually came to an end. But that meant it was also time to go home to Perak, about three hours away, where it would only be my son, my husband and myself. As we exchanged hugs, farewells and tears, I caught sight of Mother whispering urgently into Pratheip's ear. In the car, I asked him what she had said. "Oh, nothing. Your mum slipped the chicken soup recipe in the bag. She said you liked it a lot."

At his words, I erupted into peals of laughter. My husband joined me and we laughed so hard, releasing all of the suppressed tension between us. Little Kavin Samuel, our beautiful son, woke up with all the noise, gazed at us and his face crinkled into the most perfect smile. At that moment, I knew we would be just fine as parents. Besides, whenever in doubt, I know I can always count on Mother. Just, no more soup please.

Do you have a tale to tell?

We'll pay cash for any original and unpublished story we print. See page 6 for details on how to contribute.

THE DIGEST

HEALTH

Could Your Diet Stop Some Medicines From Working?

Fasting regimes like the 5:2 diet may help weight loss, but intermittent fasting may also stop some medications from working well.

WHAT'S BEEN SAID: The absorption of some medications is directly linked to when and how often we eat. Senior pharmacist Gina McLachlan from Austin Health in Melbourne advises people who take medications to speak to either their doctor or pharmacist before embarking on a diet.

Some drugs require a full stomach for maximum absorption. If you take the hepatitis C drug telaprevir, 70% less of the drug will make it into your bloodstream when fasting

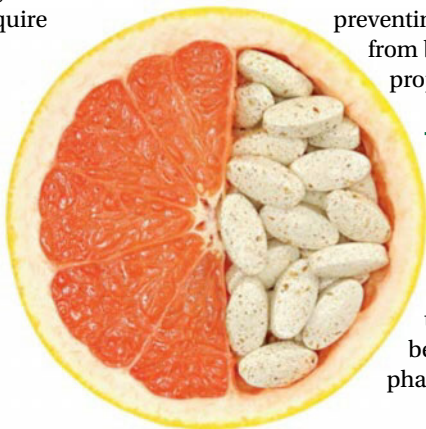
than with a full stomach. Drugs for diabetes can lead to hypoglycaemia if you take a normal dose while fasting, because food slows down digestion. Some drugs irritate your stomach if you're fasting and will leave you feeling sick; others can be affected by the food you eat.

Too many green leafy vegetables (which are high in vitamin K) can reduce the effect of the blood-thinning drug warfarin. And grapefruit can affect the enzymes in the liver, preventing some drugs from being metabolised properly.

THE BOTTOM LINE:

"Some medications need to be taken with food," says McLachlan.

"Anyone changing their diet should be talking to their pharmacist or doctor."





Products to help break this difficult addiction cycle

Help to Quit Smoking

The benefits of quitting are huge: food tastes better, your mouth feels fresher and, most importantly, your risk of tobacco-related disease drops significantly. According to the Cancer Institute of New South Wales, within 15 years of quitting, your risk of coronary heart disease is the same as someone who has never smoked.

While some smokers can quit cold turkey, others may benefit from nicotine replacement therapy,

or NRT, to help take the edge off cravings. There are five main NRT products available over-the-counter at most pharmacies. These include gum, lozenges, inhaler, patches and mouth spray – and one prescription-only medication, bupropion (Zyban). However, each of these alternatives involve different side effects and durations of use, so it's best to do your research before deciding which one is best for you.

MEDICATION	POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS	DURATION OF USE
NICOTINE GUM	Mouth soreness, indigestion	At least 3 months
NICOTINE INHALER	Mouth and throat irritation	Up to 3 months
NICOTINE LOZENGE	Sore throat, dizziness, indigestion	12 weeks to 6 months
NICOTINE PATCH	Local skin reaction	Up to 12 weeks
MOUTH SPRAY	Dizziness, headache, indigestion	Up to 12 weeks
SUSTAINED-RELEASE BUPROPION	Insomnia, dry mouth, dizziness, headaches, upset stomach	7 to 12 weeks

NEWS FROM THE World of Medicine

Knee Cartilage Surgery No Help for Many

Arthroscopic surgery for tears in the meniscus (cartilage in the knee) doesn't seem to benefit patients with age-related tears. When Canadian researchers analysed studies involving 805 participants (at an average age of 56) with such tears who underwent either surgery or more conservative treatment, they found no differences in the patients' pain and functioning in either the short term or long term. Age-related injuries may be better treated with options like physical therapy.

Brush Teeth Wisely

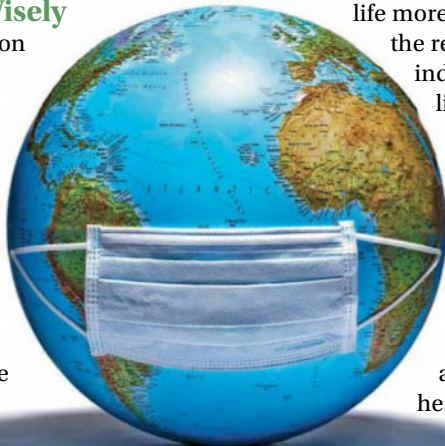
Research focusing on the dental health of people with eating disorders has implications for the general population. In a recent study published in *BioPsychoSocial Medicine*, levels of dental erosion were measured against

participants' behaviours. Those who brushed their teeth after vomiting had more eroded dentine than those who just rinsed with water. Similar levels of erosion were caused by brushing after consuming acidic foods and drinks. Instead, rinse first then brush later, making sure to brush twice a day.

Smile for Bone Health

Enjoying life may pay off in an unexpected way. Finnish researchers collected data from more than 2000 women and followed up after ten years. Women aged 60-70 who found life less satisfying experienced 52% more bone weakening in their later years than those who found

life more satisfying; the results were independent of lifestyle, diseases, physical activity, and other health factors. Experts say promoting good spirits in the elderly is just as important as promoting a healthy lifestyle.





Out of the Cold

Strategies to keep the germs away
and decrease the chances of catching a virus

PUT A BOX OF TISSUES WHEREVER

PEOPLE SIT Place tissue boxes strategically around the house, at work, and in the car. You need tissues widely available so that anyone who has to cough or sneeze or blow their nose can do so in the way least likely to spread germs.

LEAVE THE WINDOWS OPEN A

CRACK IN WINTER Not all of them, but one or two in the rooms in which you spend the most time. Fresh air does wonders for chasing out germs.

ADD GREEN TEA AND AN APPLE

TO YOUR MORNING BREAK Recent research by food nutritionists at Auckland University in New Zealand, found that eating food rich in flavonoids, a group of antioxidants, could lower the risk of adults catching a cold by as much as 33%. Flavonoids are found in green tea, apples, blueberries, red wine and cocoa. Eating five servings of vegetables and two servings of fruit each day in a

variety of colours is the ideal way to ensure you get enough flavonoids in your diet.

USE YOUR KNUCKLE TO GENTLY

RUB YOUR EYES The knuckle is less likely to be contaminated with viruses than your fingertip. The eye provides a perfect entry point for germs, and the average person rubs his eyes or nose or scratches his face 20-50 times a day, making fingers particularly good at transmitting germs.

EAT A CONTAINER OF YOGHURT

EVERY DAY A study from the University of California-Davis found that people who ate one cup of yoghurt – whether live culture or pasteurised – had 25% fewer colds than non-yoghurt eaters.

DON'T BE LAZY WITH LAUNDRY

Change or wash hand towels every three or four days during cold and flu season. Wash them in hot water to kill the germs.



What Works, What Doesn't

Answers to everyday health questions, based on the freshest research findings

SHOULD YOU CONSULT YOUR GP BEFORE TAKING A SUPPLEMENT?

YES. Many common vitamin or mineral supplements can react with certain prescription drugs. Even if you're not taking medications, talk with your doctor about which products – and how much to take.

DO WEIGHT-LOSS GROUPS HELP PEOPLE DROP MORE WEIGHT?

YES. The studies are unequivocal: people who attend support groups as part of a weight-loss programme lose more than those who go it alone. Researchers at the New York Obesity Research Center found that among 423 study participants, those who took part in a commercial weight-loss programme with group support lost more weight during the first year – 4.5kg compared to 1.5kg – than those who tried to slim down on their own.

IS BROWN BREAD ALWAYS BETTER THAN WHITE?

NO. Some brown breads are just white breads baked with caramel colouring or additives to give them a darker hue. Look for packages that say “100% wholewheat” or “100% wholegrain.” Also, check the ingredient list to make sure “wholewheat flour” is first.

CAN YOU OVERUSE EYE DROPS?

YES. Eye drops that promise to erase redness contain a decongestant that narrows blood-filled capillaries, making them less visible, so the redness fades. If you use them too many times in a row, you may experience a rebound effect, with the capillaries becoming more dilated. Limit your use to no more than a few days at a time. If redness lasts longer than a few days, consult an optometrist.



Five myths that you and your plants would be better off disregarding

Gardening Tips You Should Ignore

SWEETEN TOMATOES WITH SUGAR

Sugar can actually stunt the growth of plants, so it might be best to add it to a cup of tea rather than to the soil. If you want to grow sweeter tomatoes, look for different tomato varieties.

WATER WILTED, YELLOWING PLANTS

Although it may seem like the natural solution, water isn't always the answer. Overwatering can also cause plants to wilt or discolour, so unless the soil is dry, it is time to surrender the watering can.

BURY BANANA PEELS AND COFFEE GROUNDS

While burying banana peels can provide your plants with beneficial potassium, it can also suck up nitrogen that they need to grow. Buried coffee grounds nourish the soil but it can benefit some plants and poison others, so make sure

you do your research first. If you're determined to put your discarded peels and coffee grounds to good use, composting them is the best option.

FIGHT PESTS WITH MOTHBALLS AND SOAPY WATER

You may keep the bugs away, but burying mothballs can spread toxins in the garden and spraying dish soap on your plants can burn them. If you're determined to try either of these, test them in a small area of the garden first.

THE MORE FERTILISER THE BETTER

This is where the "too much of a good thing" rule comes in. While garden fertiliser can do wonders for your plants, going overboard can burn your plants rather than increase their growth. Before emptying the entire bag onto your favourite plant, consult the instructions.



A treat for you could be trouble for them

What Not to Feed Your Pet

BY CORINNA VAN GERWEN

Most pet owners know that chocolate – which contains the compound theobromine – can be toxic for cats and dogs, but there are other foods that could harm them:

GRAPES, RAISINS AND CURRANTS can be dangerous for your pets. “Even a small amount can cause kidney failure in cats and dogs,” says veterinarian Dr Lloyd Keddle.

ONIONS, CHIVES AND GARLIC can cause anaemia – low red blood cells – in cats and dogs. But if your pet consumes only a small amount and is treated early, any damage to the blood cells is usually reversible.

ALCOHOLIC DRINKS have the same effect on pets as they do on

us, including dizziness, lack of coordination and alcohol poisoning.

YEAST DOUGH can expand inside a pet’s stomach, stretching the abdomen and causing severe pain.

CHICKEN BONES splinter when they break, and the shards of bone could get lodged and puncture your pet’s larynx, oesophagus or stomach.

GUM, MINTS AND TOOTHPASTE that contain xylitol cause dogs to release excess insulin, resulting in low blood sugar. “A small amount can have severe side effects, such as weakness and even seizures,” says Keddle. It doesn’t seem to bother cats, but keep foods with xylitol out of reach for dogs and cats to be safe.



If you suspect your pet has eaten something harmful, call your vet immediately. Have as much information ready as you can, including what and how much was eaten and the normal weight of your pet.

EAT WELL

Orange Power

Nutritionists recommend we eat at least one serving of orange vegetables every day. Here's why

BY MARGARET NEARING

Fight breast cancer early

Retinoic acid is a substance derived from vitamin A that is plentiful in sweet potatoes and carrots. In research done at Fox Chase Cancer Center in Philadelphia, retinoic acid was found to act against breast cancer at its two earliest stages.

Love your heart Have a raw carrot for lunch and take advantage of its high level of beta-carotene. Studies show that it may lower the risk of death from cardiovascular disease.

Boost your beta Beta-carotene, an antioxidant, also helps to regulate our immune system and maintain good vision. Carrots and sweet potatoes contain high levels (spinach and kale are also good) and are best served roasted or stir-fried with a little oil, which helps vitamin A absorption.

Protect your eyes Pumpkins and carrots are rich in lutein and zeaxanthin pigments. A study of

more than 35,000 women in the *Archives of Ophthalmology* showed that those with the highest amounts of these pigments in their diet had an 18% lower risk of cataracts compared to those with the lowest. Cooked pumpkin and carrots are good choices.

Rev up your immune system

Because of its role in blood cell growth and protein metabolism, vitamin B6 helps our immune system produce antibodies to fight disease. A medium sweet potato baked in its skin has 25% of your daily needs.



PHOTOS: THINKSTOCK



Keen to up your orange?
Try these tips to get more
goodness into your day

■ **FRESH BUNCH OPTION** Grate raw carrot into a frittata or quiche before cooking. Serve with some sweet-potato hash browns on the side.

■ **SQUARE SOLUTION** Add cubed butternut to stews, casseroles or curries – especially good in those made with a little coconut milk.

■ **MEXICAN NIGHT** Add small cubes of cooked butternut to fill out meat or bean tacos and burritos.

■ **COLOURFUL EXTRAS** Roast chopped sweet potato and carrots in oven until tender. Purée or mash together and serve with chicken, white fish, pork chops or tofu.

■ **WINTER SALADS** Place warm roasted pumpkin on a bed of half baby spinach and half rocket. Crumble

fetta cheese over top and drizzle with a white wine vinegar and olive oil dressing.

■ **SWEET SIDE** Place peeled sliced sweet potatoes in a single layer on a baking sheet. Brush with olive oil and bake, turning once, until tender and browned. Serve with roast chicken, grilled steak or salmon.

■ **VEGIES FOR BREAKFAST** Mix fresh carrot juice in equal amounts with orange juice for a sunny start to the day.

■ **GREAT FOR GUESTS** Halve a small pumpkin, scrape out seeds and bake, cut side down, until soft. Stuff each half with cooked brown rice mixed with diced apple, grated cheddar cheese and walnuts. Bake until heated through.

COUNTING KILOJOULES

100 GRAMS

Pumpkin – 218 kJ

Carrot – 141 kJ

Butternut – 205 kJ

Sweet potato – 319 kJ

SCIENCE SNOOZES

Night at the Museum

Museums are now giving history lovers the chance to explore exhibits after dark in an all-night adventure.

New York Last August, NY's American Museum of Natural History held its first-ever adult sleepover. After all the \$350 tickets sold out in three hours, these grown-up slumber parties have become a regular event. Guests are met with a glass of champagne and partake in fossil-finding tours and live shows with nocturnal animals before settling down for the night beneath the iconic 29m-long blue whale.

Sydney The Australian Museum mixes it up with themed sleepover events throughout the year. From the Dinosaur to a Sleep in the Deep slumber party, children can snooze in the company of prehistoric skeletons and giant squids.

London The British Natural History Museum also hosts Dino Snores for prehistoric devotees. Available in both kid and adult versions, the



sleepovers include a torch-lit trail through the dinosaur gallery and the opportunity to sleep in the Central Hall next to the *Diplodocus* skeleton (known as Dippy). Adult parties include live music, a midnight feast and horror movie marathons.

Singapore The Art Science Museum has jumped on the Jurassic sleepover trend. With movie screenings, interactive and educational workshops, and exclusive after-hours tours to enjoy, midnight museum goers are promised the ultimate VIP experience at the "Dinosaurs: Dawn to Extinction" exhibit.

Canada The Ontario Science Centre has been hosting themed sleepovers for almost two decades. In 2015, kids can gear up for nights of fun as they build and test flying gadgets and experience the basic laws of motion at the DJ/PJ dance party.

ROAD RULES

Pointers for Travelling Pedestrians

Knowing local street-crossing styles could make the difference between happy and hurt.

BANGKOK Sometimes it's better to take matters into your own hands. As you step off the footpath, either hold up your hand or motion downwards to give drivers warning that they need to slow down and stop as you cross.

ROME Slow and steady is key. Step off the curb and the flow of traffic will miraculously part around you. However, hesitate and you'll mess up the drivers' timing and find yourself at the receiving end of angry horns.

NEW YORK According to *Lonely Planet*, New Yorkers can be careless and will cross the road without a thought about oncoming cars. When checking traffic, if you make eye contact with a driver you have to give right of way – it then becomes your responsibility to avoid the vehicle.

VIETNAM If you walk at a steady pace, motorists will race around you with ease. But if you stop suddenly you could find yourself at the mercy of one of many speeding scooters.

UNITED KINGDOM While traffic is relatively tame, the “Look right” directions aren't always enough. Considering all the one-way streets, bustling city traffic and cyclists at every angle, *Lonely Planet* advises you get into the habit of looking both ways at every crossing.

GERMANY It's uncommon to see locals straying from designated crosswalks. Although this good behaviour is common sense, it might also have something to do with the presence of police who have been known to issue jaywalking tickets.



Can you take a
cheque instead?

Found! One of the World's Oldest Receipts

While most of us throw away receipts without a second thought, ancient historian Brice Jones, from Concordia University in Montreal, is currently marvelling over what appears to be one of history's oldest bills.

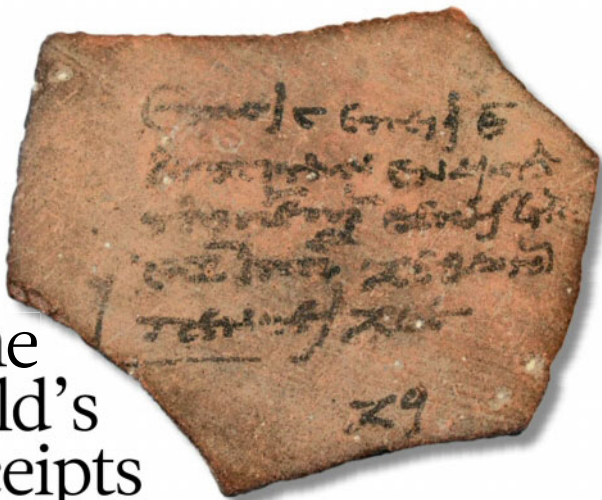
Jones was teaching an undergraduate course in 2014 and had organised a trip to McGill University Rare Books and Special Collections. It was here, sorting through ancient treasures, that he discovered the receipt from Ancient Egypt. "I was quite excited when I realised that an unpublished tax receipt from Ptolemaic Egypt was sitting right under my nose," says Jones.

An expert in Classical and Koine Greek, the historian deciphered the text, with a date on it that corresponds to July 22, 98BC. It was written on pottery, a popular and cheap medium at the time. The receipt was for a land-transfer tax that added

up to 75 "talents" (one talent equals 6000 drachmas), with a 15-talent surcharge. "It's remarkable because the sum of payment [90 talents] is almost unheard of," says Jones. "I've not been able to find a higher sum in land-transfer tax receipts from ancient Thebes during this period."

As paper money and large denomination coins didn't exist, it may well have taken 540,000 drachmas to pay the huge bill. The bronze coins likely weighed more than 100kg and would've been transferred to the bank using donkeys and carts. Although Jones can confirm the bill was delivered to a public bank in Diospolis Magna (also known as Luxor or Thebes), the name of the payer is illegible.

Although it's difficult to calculate a modern equivalent, it tallies at around \$1670 – a lot of effort for a relatively small sum by today's standards.

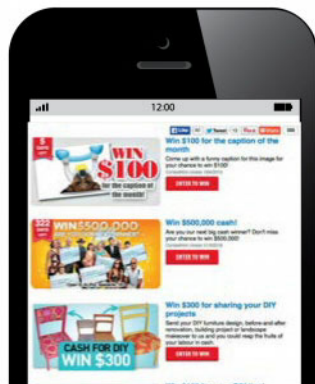


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First look at future issues

Get a sneak peek at upcoming stories and covers



We give great advice

Get regular home, health and food tips from The Digest



*The most wasted of all days
is one without laughter*

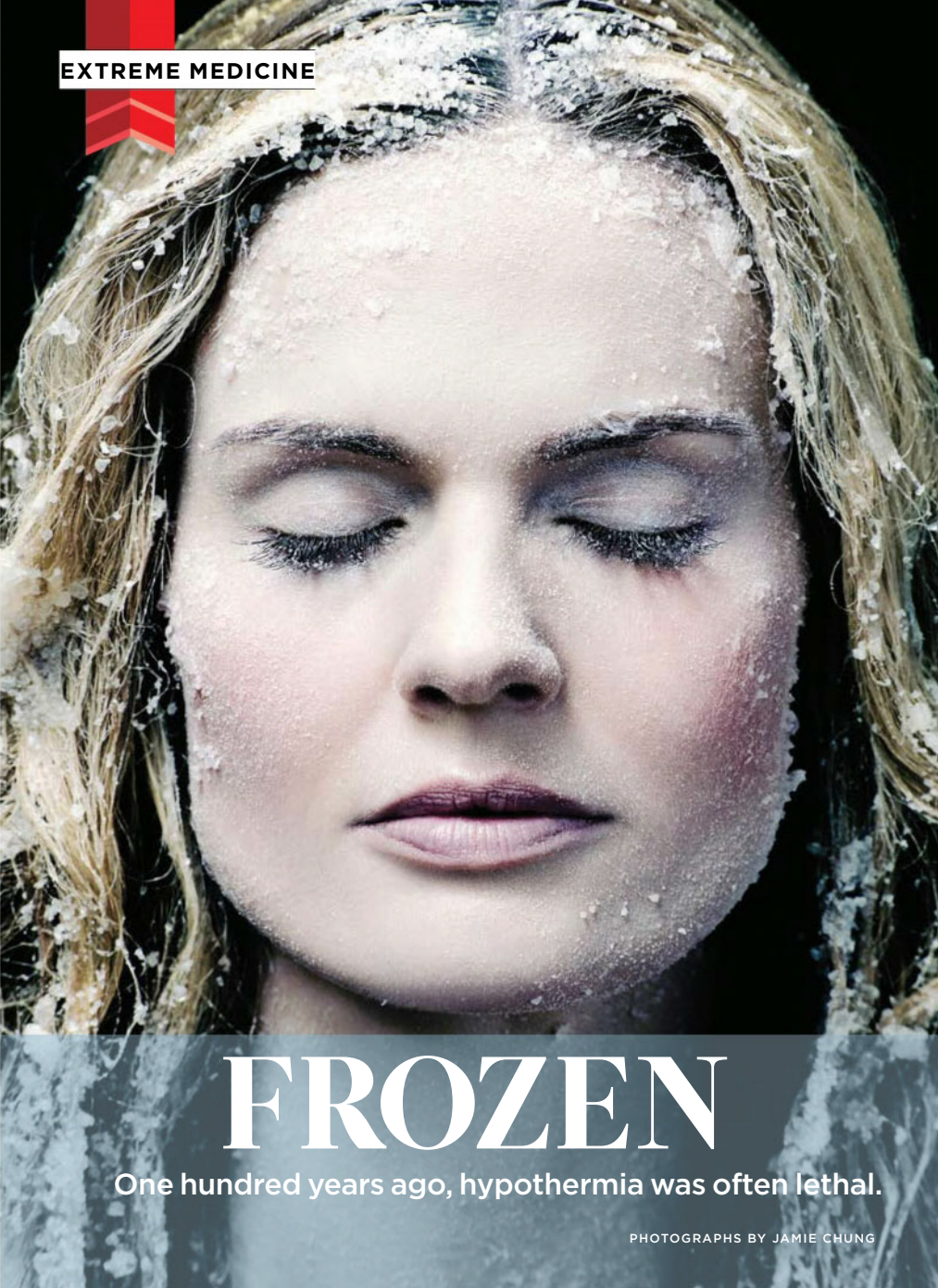
E.E. CUMMINGS, poet



We help you get motivated

#QuotableQuotes and
#PointstoPonder to get you
through the day





EXTREME MEDICINE

FROZEN

One hundred years ago, hypothermia was often lethal.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMIE CHUNG



BACK TO LIFE

Now doctors induce it to save people on the brink of death

BY DR KEVIN FONG FROM *EXTREME MEDICINE*

ROBERT FALCON SCOTT IS DYING, SLOWLY SUCCUMBING TO HYPOTHERMIA IN A TENT PITCHED ON THE WASTELANDS OF THE ROSS ICE SHELF, FULL OF THE WEARY KNOWLEDGE THAT HE WAS NOT THE FIRST EXPLORER TO REACH THE SOUTH POLE – ONLY THE FIRST TO HAVE LOST AN ENTIRE EXPEDITIONARY PARTY DOING SO.

IT IS 1912. Antarctica is as inaccessible as it is fraught with risk; and that, of course, is its attraction, leading men to pit their lives against its challenges. Having been beaten to the pole by Roald Amundsen's Norwegian expedition, Scott now embarks on a race of a different kind: the scramble to write letters to the next of kin of his expedition team, telling of the men's brilliance and honour and how he was responsible for leading them to their deaths. Time is against him.

Not only can temperatures freeze exposed flesh in seconds, but the continent's great sheets of ice hold water locked away, and less than a single inch of rain falls inland each year. The Ross Ice Shelf is a desert, and it will attempt to dehydrate and desiccate Scott's body. With much of the continent thrust 3km above sea level, Scott is high enough to make heavy exertion uncomfortable, even for the acclimatised. That's not to mention the scouring Antarctic winds, which will carry heat away from his body, driving his temperature down. All

told, Antarctica is a continent of fierce extremes: the coldest, the highest, the most parched. Its climate has made it uninhabitable for all but the last hundred years of human history.

Bleak though Antarctica may be, it's important to consider how Scott's body reacts to his plummeting temperature because that process is the key to an extraordinary advance in future medical technology.

1912: Shivers, Then Merciful Sleep

Scott's physiology is designed to battle for him, to give him his best chance of survival. As he writes, he feels the heat draining out of his hand. The blood vessels that run through his body's periphery, carrying hot blood to his skin's surface and losing that heat uselessly to the outside world, are constricting. His body hair stands on end to trap more air close to his skin. Both of these measures are an effort to reduce conductive heat loss. In the Antarctic environment,

however, this physiological strategy is next to useless.

Next, Scott begins to shiver uncontrollably, generating enough heat to slow the drop in temperature. This shivering is more than the casual tremor we might feel at a bus stop in midwinter; Scott's muscles shake as hard as they can, consuming fat and carbohydrates ravenously. This last attempt at staving off death becomes an act of physical endurance in itself. It continues while there is enough fuel to do so. But shivering, no matter how athletically, is merely the body's method of buying time in the hope that something in its external environment will change for the better.

As deep hypothermia proceeds, it alters Scott's mind, making him irritable and possibly irrational. When his body's reserves of fuel run out, the shivering stops – which only accelerates the rate at which he cools. Mercifully, something that looks like sleep follows, as the electrical activity in his brain begins to fail. He slips into a coma well before the impairment of his heart muscle's cell membranes, the gatekeepers of electrical stability in that organ. Frenzied anarchic rhythms may follow, the heart writhing uselessly like a bag of worms before finally coming to a standstill. With his heart no longer beating, his body is deprived of fresh oxygen.

But at such low temperatures, the rate at which Scott's cells fail and die is dragged out. The normal window of

a few hundred seconds when his brain is dying, yet his circulation might still be reestablished, is instead stretched to many minutes.

This window, elongated by cold temperatures, becomes crucial to medical practitioners in the years ahead. Here's how hypothermia has today become an asset to medicine, a tool for cheating death.

1999: Miracle Under the Ice

In May 1999, three junior doctors, Anna Bågenholm, Torvind Naesheim, and Marie Falkenberg, were skiing off trail in the Kjølén Mountains of Northern Norway. The beautiful evening was one of the first days of eternal sunshine at the start of summer. All three were expert skiers; Anna began her run confidently.

But Anna unexpectedly lost control. Torvind and Marie watched from afar as she tumbled headlong into a thick layer of ice covering a mountain stream. Anna fell through a hole in the ice, her head and chest trapped beneath the frozen surface. Her clothes began to soak, their extra weight carrying her deeper, dragging her downstream with the current and farther beneath the ice.

Torvind and Marie arrived just in time to grab her ski boots, stopping her from vanishing under the lip of the ice. Anna was lying face up with her mouth and nose out of the water



ANNA'S HEART HAD NOT BEATEN FOR AT LEAST TWO HOURS. HER CORE TEMPERATURE, 13.7°C, WAS LOWER THAN ANY SURVIVING PATIENT'S IN RECORDED MEDICAL HISTORY



in an air pocket. She continued to struggle, freezing, in the Arctic stream.

None of the three could have been in any doubt about the seriousness of the situation. Even in those first minutes, Anna's core temperature was beginning to plunge. Torvind called for help on his mobile phone. Two rescue teams were sent, one from the top of the mountain, on skis, and another from the town of Narvik at its base.

The ski team arrived first, but the snow shovel the group had brought couldn't break through the thick covering of ice.

Forty minutes after Anna became trapped, her desperate thrashing stopped, and her body went limp. The hypothermia, now profound enough to anaesthetise her brain, would soon stop her heart. Another 40 minutes passed before rescuers arrived with a more substantial shovel that could

break through the ice. Anna's body, lifeless and blue, was pulled out of the stream. She had stopped breathing and was without a pulse. As the resuscitation effort began, the challenge Anna faced seemed insurmountable. Her core body temperature was more than 23°C lower than it should have been.

The key to good resuscitation is to keep the blood supplied with oxygen and moving around the body. This is achieved by breathing for the patient and then compressing the chest rhythmically to provide something approximating circulation. None of this is as efficient as the body's native heartbeat and breathing, but it buys time. In principle, it sounds straightforward. In practice, there is perhaps nothing that adequately describes the sickening, repetitive crunch of ribs beneath the heel of the rescuer's hand or the rising sense of desperation that the rescuer feels as the minutes tick by.

Just before 8pm, more than an hour and a half after she fell into the stream, Anna was whisked onto a helicopter. While the aircraft was moving speedily across the Norwegian landscape, the struggle to save Anna's life became a desperate scramble. Helicopters, with their cramped conditions and deafening noise, are among the most difficult places to work.

When the helicopter touched down at Tromsø University Hospital, Anna's heart had not beaten for at least two hours. Her core temperature, 13.7°C,

was lower than any surviving patient's in recorded medical history. This was genuine *terra incognita*. Further attempts to resuscitate Anna could proceed only in the knowledge that in similar situations, past medical teams had always failed.

But the team at Tromsø decided to continue. There was still the glimmer of hope that the terrible cold might also have preserved her brain.

MADS GILBERT, the anaesthetist leading the resuscitation effort, moved Anna to the operating room. Raising her temperature was going to be a massive challenge. Warm blankets and heated rooms alone wouldn't be nearly enough. Raising Anna's whole body temperature through all those missing degrees would take an enormous amount of energy – equivalent to the boiling of dozens of kettles of water. To do this quickly and without doing harm in the process, Mads knew Anna would have to be put on a heart-lung bypass machine, the sort of device normally reserved for open-heart surgery. By removing Anna's chilled blood, circulating it in a bypass machine, and heating and then returning it to her lifeless body, doctors could raise her core temperature rapidly. At least that was the theory. Thirty minutes after Anna was established on the heart-lung bypass machine, her core temperature had increased by more than half, to 31°C. The heart, its molecular

machinery now warm enough to work again, stuttered at first, unable to regain its own essential rhythm. But eventually, electricity began to flow through the muscle of her heart, followed by waves of contraction. A little after 10pm, Anna's heart started to beat independently for the first time in at least three hours.

But the fight was far from over. During the scramble to save Anna's life, the team had damaged an artery behind the collarbone on the right side of her chest. The haemorrhage that followed was made far worse by Anna's hypothermic state because blood loses much of its ability to clot at low temperatures. The team now faced the possibility that she could bleed to death. Cardiothoracic surgeons had to open her chest, isolate the bleeding artery, and stop the haemorrhage. After hours of work by dozens of people, she was finally stable enough to be transferred to the intensive care unit.

While there, Anna miraculously survived lung failure and kidney failure and opened her eyes for the first time after just 12 days. She found herself paralysed from the neck down, alive but quadriplegic.

Thankfully, Anna's paralysed body did not remain that way. It wasn't an irreversible injury to her spinal cord that had left her unable to move. Instead, her peripheral nerves, damaged by the extremes of cold, had failed. Slowly but surely, these nerves and her

flaccid muscles began to regain their function. It would ultimately take six hard years of rehabilitation, but the day came when Anna was well enough to ski and return to her training as a doctor. She specialised in radiology and now works at the hospital that saved her life.

Anna Bågenholm is an extraordinary survivor. Against seemingly impossible odds, doctors exploited her profound hypothermia to resuscitate her. While her survival occurred in the context of an accident, other patients continue to benefit from hypothermia by design.

2010 and Beyond: Hypothermia Saves Lives

Esmail Dezhbod's symptoms had begun to worry him. He felt pressure in his chest, at times great pain. A body scan revealed that Esmail was in trouble. He had an aneurysm of his thoracic aorta, a swelling of the main arterial tributary leading from his heart. This vessel had doubled in size, to the width of a can of Coke.

Esmail had a bomb in his chest that might go off at any moment. Aneurysms elsewhere can usually be repaired with relative ease. But in this location, so close to the heart, there are no easy options. The thoracic aorta carries blood from the heart and into the upper body, supplying oxygen to the brain, among other organs. To repair the aneurysm, flow would have

to be interrupted by stopping the heart. At normal body temperatures, this and the accompanying oxygen starvation would damage the brain, leading to permanent disability or death within three or four minutes.

Esmail's surgeon, cardiac specialist Dr John Elefteriades, decided to carry out the procedure under the conditions of deep hypothermic arrest. He used a heart-lung bypass machine to cool Esmail's body to a mere 18°C before stopping his heart completely. Then, while the heart and circulation were at a standstill, Elefteriades performed the complicated repair, racing the clock while his patient lay dying on the operating table.

I was there to watch this remarkable feat of surgery. Though Elefteriades is an old hand with hypothermic arrest, he says that every time feels like a leap of faith. Once circulation has come to a standstill, he has no more than about 45 minutes before irreversible damage to the patient's brain occurs. Without the induced hypothermia, he would have just four.

The doctor lays the stitches down elegantly and efficiently, making

every movement count. He has to cut out the diseased section of the aorta, a length of around 15cm, then replace it with an artificial graft. The electrical activity in Esmail's brain is, at this point, undetectable. He is not breathing and has no pulse. Physically and biochemically, he is indistinguishable from someone who is dead.

After 32 minutes, the repair is complete. The team warms Esmail's freezing body, and very quickly his heart explodes back to life, pumping beautifully, delivering a fresh supply of oxygen to his brain for the first time in over half an hour.

A day later, I visit Esmail in the intensive care unit. He is awake and well. His wife stands by his bed, overjoyed to have him back.

TO CURE ESMAIL, the surgeons had to come close to killing him – using profound hypothermia to buy his survival. Within a century, we have come to understand the process that killed Robert Falcon Scott – and learned how to use it to our advantage. Esmail and Anna are living proof that these physical extremes can cure as well as kill. **R**

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NOT-SO SMOOTH CRIMINAL

A robber who attempted to hide his identity while raiding a petrol station has become a laughing stock after his face, as clear as day, was picked up on CCTV. His disguise? A see-through plastic bag.



Laughter

THE BEST MEDICINE



YOU ONLY LIVE TWICE

Following a funeral service, the pallbearers are carrying the casket out of the church when they accidentally bump into a wall. From inside the coffin they hear a faint moan. Opening the lid, they find the man inside alive! He leaps out, performs a little jig, and lives another ten years before eventually keeling over.

Once again, the ceremony is conducted, and at the end the pallbearers carry out the casket. As they head towards the doors of the church, the wife of the deceased leaps to her feet and shouts, "Watch the wall!"

SUBMITTED BY DORIS POOLE

GOOD SAMARITAN

A lawyer was driving along in his car when he saw two men alongside the road eating grass. Disturbed, he pulled over to investigate.

"Why are you eating grass?" he asked.

"We don't have any money for food," one of the men replied.

"We have to eat grass."

"Well, then, you can come with me to my house and I'll feed you," the lawyer replied.

The men thanked him



and climbed into his car. As they got comfortable, the lawyer turned to them and said, "You'll love my place. The grass is almost a foot high."

source: scotsman.com

Every novel is a mystery novel if you never finish it.

@MEGANAMRAM ON TWITTER

TAKEN

The cool part about naming your kid is you don't have to add six letters to make sure the name is available.

@BILLMURRAY ON TWITTER



"Here. I sold you on eBay."

BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

Honesty may be the best policy, but it's important to remember that, by elimination, dishonesty is the second-best policy.

COMEDIAN GEORGE CARLIN

LAUGH TILL IT HURTS

My neighbour is in the *Guinness World Records*. He's had 44 concussions. He lives very close to me. A stone's throw away, in fact.

COMEDIAN STEWART FRANCIS

A man knocked on my door and asked for a small donation toward the local swimming pool.

So I gave him a glass of water.

COMEDIAN GREG DAVIES

When my boyfriend plays fantasy football, I play fantasy new boyfriend.

COMEDIAN BECCA KOHLER

SENIOR MOMENT

Three elderly men arrive at the doctor's surgery for a memory test. The doctor asks the first man, "What's three times three?"

"274," comes the reply.

The doctor rolls his eyes, looks up at the ceiling and says to the second man, "It's your turn. What's three times three?"

"Tuesday," replies the second man.

The doctor shakes his head sadly, then asks the third man, "OK, your turn. What's three times three?"

"Nine," says the third man.

"That's great!" says the doctor.

"How'd you get that?"

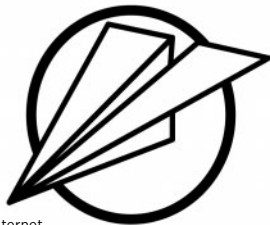
"Simple," he says. "Just subtract 274 from Tuesday."

Source: allnurses.com



My paper manufacturing business has folded seven times. I'm pretty sure it can't happen again.

Seen on the internet



Wondering if your neuroses, phobias and eccentricities are normal?

Never fear; you're in good company, according to our panel of experts

BY LENORE SKENAZY



Is It Just Me



A M I THE ONLY ONE WHO THINKS landlocked boats are ominous? Anyone else out there who loves the smell of wet paint and dirty socks? Surely others share my suspicions that Brad Pitt and Danny DeVito are brothers. No? Well, I know one thing: a lot of you have odd peccadilloes too. So we've shared a list of our readers' obsessions and anxieties with therapists, doctors, professors and gossip columnists (OK, not them) in hopes that they could answer the question ... Is it just us?

I HATE GETTING PRESENTS.

Every time I get one, all I can think is, Oh, great – now I have to get *her* a present. Am I a grinch?

Technically, the Grinch did not hate getting presents at all. He liked them so much, in fact, he stole them. So for what it's worth, you are not a grinch. Perhaps more reassuringly, you are also not alone.

There's actually something called gift-giving anxiety, a condition described by University of Michigan professor D.B. Wooten as anxiety based on "the need for approval and fear of being seen or judged in

a negative way." When getting a gift means giving one – and giving one means worrying whether the gift is thoughtful, reciprocal or expensive enough – naturally it's not fun to get a gift. It feels like you've been given a test.

"There are a lot of sitcoms based on this," chuckles Alan Hilfer, chief psychologist at Maimonides Medical Center. He recalls a sitcom-worthy situation with friends who travelled a lot and always brought him back a gift. "I'm not saying it was expensive. They'd go to Colombia and bring me back a bag of coffee. But that meant then I'd have to remember to pick up a present for them."

SOME PEOPLE ARE SENSITIVE TO CERTAIN
ODOURS, LOVING OR HATING THEM



ILLUSTRATIONS: ISTVAN BANYAI

This was so pointless – annoying, really – that eventually the doctor called them on it. “I said, ‘You don’t have to bring me something, because I really don’t like to look around for something for you.’” Except he put it more diplomatically: “Please! Spend the money on yourself.”

Poof! The problem (and gifts) disappeared. So it may be worth exploring – delicately – the possibility that both you and your gift-givers want out.

MY FRIENDS SAY I AM OBSESSED WITH “CONSPIRACY THEORIES”.

I say I am obsessed with the truth. Honestly, can't everyone else see the plots, machinations and treachery that I see?

No, they can't. But that doesn't mean that they are blind or that you are a fruitcake. “For society to work, we need the people who are ultra-relaxed, but we also need the worrywarts,” says Howard Forman, an assistant professor of psychiatry at Albert Einstein College of Medicine. The worriers are the conspiracy theorists – folks who won't rest till they put the pieces together.

Such folks can go off the deep end, of course, and you don't necessarily want to sit next to one of them on a plane. But they can also go off and discover that the US National Security Agency has been listening to phone calls – an idea that would have

LOOKING FOR A CONSPIRACY IS A WAY TO GAIN A LITTLE SENSE OF POWER

sounded completely paranoid before whistleblower Edward Snowden revealed that it's true.

Our world is complex. It is filled with things we'll never understand. Looking for a conspiracy is a way to gain a little sense of power, says psychiatrist David Reiss: It feels like you understand what's happening, even if others don't. An explanation, even one that sounds bizarre or frightening, feels more satisfying than no explanation at all.

SMELLS THAT EVERYONE ELSE SEEMS TO FIND AWFUL, I LOVE!

Wet paint! Petrol! Even (can I admit it here?) the smell of dirty socks – they sometimes smell like roasted nuts. Am I wired wrong?

There's a bell curve to all experiences, including how things smell to us, says Reiss. That means some people are always going to be more sensitive to certain odours, loving or hating them.

But beyond that, smells are like songs: intensely evocative. The

olfactory nerves go directly from the nose to the limbic system, which is the part of the brain that stores memories and processes emotions. So if you fondly remember your mother taking care of you when you were sick, Vicks VapoRub may smell like heaven to you, as will dirty socks if you and your brother used to play in the woods and come home happy but stinky. The smell brings back the feelings, without you necessarily making the conscious connection between then and now.

By the same token, if you threw up at your pizza party when you were six, one whiff of pepperoni could send you running from the room, even to this day ... leaving more pizza for the rest of us.

I ALWAYS FORGET THE DREAMS IN WHICH I CAME UP WITH

CLEVER IDEAS. My question is:
Were those ideas really brilliant?
Or did I just think so at the time?

When you're asleep, your mind is relaxed, so thoughts float freely without worrying about your inner editor or the boundaries of logic, says healthcare consultant Dr Archelle Georgiou. As a result, you can come up with ideas you'd never have in your waking life, and some of these can be brilliant.

In 1953, James Watson dreamed of two intertwined snakes (or, some say, a double-sided spiral staircase) that

made him picture a double helix. This was pretty key, since he – along with Francis Crick, Maurice Wilkins and Rosalind Franklin – went on to prove that DNA is in fact a double helix.

But lest you feel terrible about all the Nobel Prizes you've missed out on because you were too lazy to grab a pen, remember the *Seinfeld* episode on just this issue. Jerry came up with a great joke in his dream, so he scribbled it down. The next morning, he couldn't read his writing. No-one else could either. Was it a Nobel-worthy joke? No. When he finally remembered it, he realised it wasn't funny at all. Which struck us all as funny.

THE OLDER I GET, THE HARDER I FIND IT IS TO EDIT MYSELF.

If someone in front of me is walking slowly, I have heard someone mutter, "Move, already!" and it turns out to be me! Same thing in the supermarket line: "Wow, this is taking forever!" Is it normal to become more irritable with the years?

"It's in the range of normal, but it won't make you any friends," says psychotherapist Tina Tessina, author of *It Ends with You: Grow Up and Out of Dysfunction*. "We all have these same thoughts, but you need to practise putting a lock on your lips so they don't tumble out."

That lock is called social inhibition.

"PEOPLE
PLEASERS" HATE
TO BE REJECTED,
JUDGED OR TO
UPSET OTHERS

Little kids have to develop it – that's why they'll tell a stranger in the lift, "Wow, you're fat!" – and in older people, it can begin to neurologically ebb away. That's why *they* may tell a stranger in the lift, "Wow, you're fat!"

But another reason older folks may sound impatient is simply that they are. They see time is slipping away. When we have only so many years left on this mortal coil, "we don't necessarily want to spend them behind someone taking forever to choose a head of lettuce," says Hilfer. "So shouting, 'That one's good!' is not unusual."

I LOVE SQUIRRELS SO MUCH, IT SCARES ME. I carry nuts in my pocket, and feeding them is often the high point of my day. It's not like the rest of my life is so boring or pathetic.

"I know lots of people who carry around treats for dogs," says Hilfer. "Feeding squirrels is less common, but people have exceptionally strong bonds with animals. There's a woman

who used to go to the park across the street every morning to throw bread crumbs to the pigeons. We all hated her. We'd say, 'Why are you doing this?' She'd say, 'They need to eat.' It gave her a purpose."

Animals are lovable, and they don't talk back. This gladdens any heart, especially one that's lonely. So don't feel bad about being a squirrel lady – or gent. You just may also want to find some more humans to interact with. Upside: they respond kindly to being fed too.

I FEEL TERRIBLE IF I'M RUNNING LATE FOR A MEETING, but if someone is late meeting up with me, I understand that delays happen. Why am I harder on myself than on everyone else?

You are a "people pleaser," says Dr Friedemann Schaub, author of *The Fear & Anxiety Solution*. "You hate to be rejected, you hate to be judged, and you hate to upset others," he says. So you have come up with a "survival pattern" to make sure you don't have to suffer any of those situations. That survival pattern includes making sure you are on time so that people don't get angry at you. It soothes your anxiety.

The reason it doesn't bother you when other people are a little late is that their unpunctuality doesn't trigger that same worry and fear. In

DIDN'T CRY AT THAT MOVIE? IT MIGHT HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH YOUR PAST



fact, if they're late, you get to be gracious and kind, which gives you a little self-congratulatory lift. Feels good!

And remember: while the phrase *people pleaser* carries slightly doormat-ish connotations, being reliable and forgiving is hardly a bad quality. In fact, says Forman, it's generally evidence of "a very well-adjusted individual who will probably experience a lot more pleasure from the world than your average person who is not as forgiving". So forgive yourself for being forgiving – and also a bit compulsively early.

I RENTED *THE FAULT IN OUR STARS* AND DIDN'T CRY. That's right: I'm the earthling who did not cry at that movie. I told a friend who told everyone else, and now they're actually cross with me.

Somehow (How? *How?*) you weren't moved to tears by the plucky, funny, cute, courageous, cancer-doomed kids in that movie? Well, don't feel too bad. There must've been someone else, somewhere, who sat through it stone-faced. Maybe.

Actually, there are a bunch of reasons a person might not cry at a particular tearjerker, says Tessina. Maybe the movie reminded you of something so close to home that you're holding it in. "You may be too overwhelmed to cry," she says.

It's possible that something happened in your past that was so traumatic – losing your mother when you were little, say – that you never completely processed it. When you see something similar and you have kept yourself from crying about the original event for so long, you might still be unable to cry.

Or maybe you see how you're being manipulated and refuse to give in to a sob story. If so, you might consider a career in traffic enforcement.

I'M MR MALAPROP. I'm not an idiot, and I'm not shy. But no matter what, words tumble out of my mouth differently than how I thought of them. Why?

"You're right, you're not an idiot, Mr Malaprop, but you are likely a 'clutterer,'" says Georgiou. Clutterers may keep interrupting themselves or revising what they're saying as they

go along. One sufferer described it as "feeling like 20 thoughts are exploding in my mind all at once, and I need to express them all."

Cluttering usually starts around age seven or eight, and no-one knows what triggers it. But if this feels like it applies to you, Georgiou suggests seeing a speech therapist, who will try to slow down your rate of speech.

This can be done by having the patient listen to a sentence spoken at a normal rate on a tape and then repeat the same sentence. An electronic graph of the patient's words is then "traced" over another graph of the sentence spoken at the normal rate, to make the difference visual and obvious. With practice slowing down and hyper-articulating every syllable, clutterers can declutter.

Speech is a complex and rapid process. We produce up to 150 words a minute, and multiple parts of the brain are involved, tasked with 1) the intention of what to say, 2) the planning of what to say, and 3) the articulation of the sounds – all within milliseconds. This explains why speech blunders often occur among those who speak a lot. So next time, try being a bit more understanding of that gaffe-prone politician. **R**

* *

WINNING AT LIFE

I'm glad I moved to walking distance from a supermarket. Now all I have to do to get groceries is drive across the street! @TAYLORCOMEDY

After her husband is murdered, Ao Evans is embraced
by a community that hardly knew her

NOT WITHOUT MY *Neighbours*

BY LINDA VACCARIELLO
FROM CINCINNATI MAGAZINE



AT 5.53PM ON JUNE 15, 2013, the security cameras at Cosmic Pizza in Hartwell, Ohio, just outside Cincinnati, recorded the four minutes that changed the lives of the Evans family.

A customer enters the small takeaway restaurant and places an order at the counter. The owner, Rich Evans, moves back to talk with the small woman in the food preparation area. The customer crosses behind the counter and pulls a gun. The woman throws herself in front of three tiny figures. Rich Evans runs for the door. The gunman shoots and follows.



Out of sight of video surveillance, the end played out like this: shots rang out, Rich stumbled into an adjoining yard – and one family’s nightmare became a community’s challenge.

As the coroner’s office carried out its grim mission, an officer sat with Rich’s wife in a police car. As the woman wept, someone asked her whom to call. Family? Friends? Neighbours?

“We don’t have anybody,” she wailed. “No-one.”

RICH EVANS’S WIDOW – Ornuma “Ao” Evans – was born in Thailand. She hadn’t spoken to her own relatives in years and knew very little about her husband’s. She didn’t have the name of anyone – not a friend or a neighbour – to call on for support. She also didn’t have a phone, a driver’s licence, or house keys.

And then there was this: she didn’t know her own address. Officers located the family’s house with the help of Google Street View.

Margot Madison was one of the on-lookers who had been drawn by the commotion. Looking back on that grim evening, she recalls how surreal it was. “I remember thinking: *What am I supposed to do with this experience?*”

The next morning, she went to see Ao Evans with some other neighbours. The shattered woman who opened the door let them in and answered their questions. “We were looking for clues about who the Evanses were,” says Madison.

There was a typed to-do list on the

fridge and giant containers of supplies waiting to be lugged to the restaurant. There were also the hand-drawn Father’s Day cards ready for a dad who, now, would never see them.

But it soon became apparent that the family functioned in a way that was ... different. Even with keys, Ao – pronounced “O” – couldn’t have disarmed the security system, because she didn’t know how. She’d never really needed to: the family went everywhere together – including to Cosmic, where the kids played in a back room each day while their parents worked. Ao didn’t use a phone; Rich made all the calls. When Madison gave her an envelope of cash hastily collected that morning, Ao looked baffled. Handling money was alien; Rich did the shopping.

Police had broken a window to get Ao and her children into the house the night before, so one neighbour set about fixing it; another called the morgue to retrieve the keys that were with Rich’s body. Among those who showed up was Lisa McDonald. Like everyone else, she didn’t really know the family. “I figured we’d do something like make meals for them for a while,” she says.

McDonald turned her attention to the kids – solemn eight-year-old Jimmy; Zoey, a five-year-old with a face as sweet as a pansy; and their sparrow of a baby sister, Ashton, 18 months. The children were well cared for and obviously bright. But when McDonald asked Jimmy what grade he was in, he didn’t know how to answer:

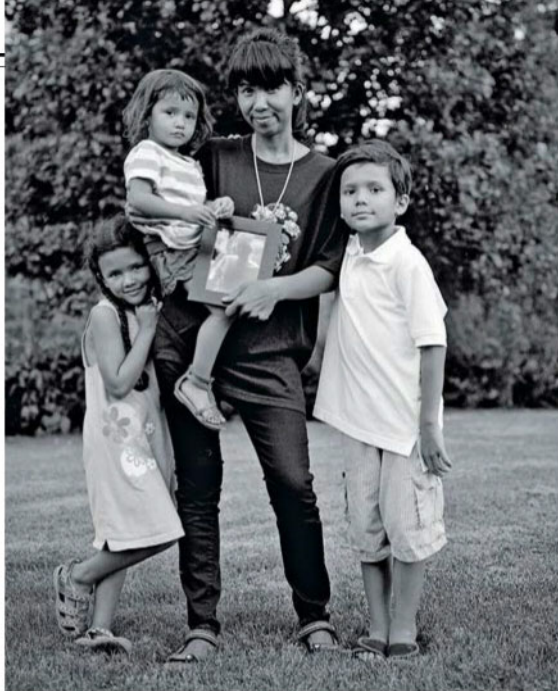
he wasn't enrolled in school. Then a friend pulled McDonald aside and filled her in on what was known about Ao's situation.

"She had no-one. I couldn't imagine what that was like," McDonald says. She went to Ao, threw her arm around the sobbing woman's shoulders, and said, "We'll help you."

People pitched in, making funeral arrangements. Someone set up a Go Fund Me site for donations that collected more than \$40,000. One neighbour bought Ao a mobile phone and taught her how to use it; another showed her how to shop for groceries. Volunteers went through the house, looking for bills that needed to be paid, tracking down birth certificates for the children and scouring drawers for anything that looked legally significant.

Dawn Murray, a former community council president, took over the family's finances, since Ao had never written a cheque. McDonald, who worked in the cafeteria at a private school, talked with the principal about Zoey and Jimmy. He agreed to enrol the children and found a sponsor to pay their tuition for the coming year.

Wan Lindquist, owner of a Thai restaurant, took on the job of checking Ao's immigration status. The news wasn't good: Ao said that Rich had paid a lawyer in San Francisco to take



Ao – with Zoey, Ashton, and Jimmy – is 35, but she often tells people she's 50, the age Rich was when he died

care of getting her a green card, but the lawyer had absconded with the money. Attorney Matt Wagner took her case pro bono.

All this help meant that a woman who had lived a very private existence now found herself explaining her life – and her marriage. It turns out, her present predicament may have had to do with another death, years ago and a world away.

AO WAS NAMED AFTER HER OLDER sister, a three-year-old who had died in a flood in her home province in southern Thailand. When Ao was born soon

after, her parents not only used the sister's name but "gave" Ao the same birthdate: they enrolled the little girl, then three, in school when the dead child would have been six. Belittled for talking like a baby, humiliated when she soiled her pants, she ping-ponged between aggression and withdrawal. By 14, she was finished with school.

The one bright spot in her days was Thai kickboxing, a combat that trains a fighter to become a ferocious windmill of feet, knees, elbows and fists. With boxing, she says, "I didn't need to talk."

It was at a kickboxing match that she met Rich Evans, a visitor to Thailand. He was intrigued by how this small woman ended up in such a brutal sport. They became friends. He seemed to understand the deep pain behind her silences, and he wanted to take care of her. Rich took her to the US on a fiancée visa in 2006, and in 2009, they opened Cosmic Pizza.

In this working-class neighbourhood, the cheerful building that turned out pizza with great crust was a lifesaver for fast meals. And in his white jacket and chef's toque, Rich seemed like the kind of gregarious guy you'd expect behind the counter.

Yet Rich remains a mystery. His sister, Doris Lanphear, describes a childhood that would have made Dickens weep. Abandoned by their mother as toddlers and raised by a corrosive grandmother and an alcoholic father, Lanphear says that her brother scrapped his way through school ("He got kicked out a

lot"), vocational training, and a stint in juvenile detention.

In his own way, Rich Evans was trying to be an outstanding husband and father. When the Evanses weren't working, they did things together. Summer evenings, after Cosmic was closed for the day, they went to amusement parks; other times, they'd turn on music and have goofy dance parties in the living room. Rich loved to take them all out to eat. If their clannishness was ever a problem, he didn't seem to notice. His children didn't have friends; his wife didn't know a neighbour to ask for a cup of sugar. But they had each other.

Ao knows that some people are critical of the things Rich did – how do you not give your wife a house key? But she wants them to understand that he was a good man and a good father and that even if their family life was not like other people's, it was a happy one.

Last November, a friend set Ao up with a Facebook page, and now it's possible to follow the trajectory of the Evanses' lives online – to learn that Dan Heidel fixed Zoey's bike and that Ashton discovered Darlene Heidel's cookie jar; to see pictures from the zoo, the skating rink, the driving lessons; and to view selfies taken with the friends who made these outings possible.

And also on Facebook, Ao is always thanking someone for something – a visit, a DVD for the kids to watch, a kindness. Often when she posts her gratitude, the thanks come from "the Evans family living in this world."

SHARE YOUR STORY



Spread the love by telling your tale about a generous or caring neighbour

Do you have a neighbour who goes out of their way to help others? Share your special and heartwarming story with Reader's Digest readers. Submissions must reach us by August 31, 2015. Please mark your story "Caring Neighbour". See page 6 for how to submit.

Here's one we loved:

"When I was eight, and taking my

first piano lessons, our neighbours across the street let me come over to practise on their piano. I must have made some horrible sounds on that piano. But what kind, patient neighbours they were to welcome an eight-year-old without a piano into their home to practise on theirs. (Also – why was I taking piano lessons when we did not own a piano?)"

DANIELLE SAYER

It's a curious expression, one that Ao explains this way: she was crazed and desperate the morning after Rich's murder: genuinely suicidal. But then, out of nowhere, her porch was full of people – strangers – offering to help.

If that hadn't happened, she wonders, what would have become of them? But they are alive and living in this world. "I like to say that," she says.

JUNE 14, 2014, ON THE SUNNY, BALMY day that would have been Rich Evans's 51st birthday, his family gathers with 20 friends at his grave for a celebration. There's a tent and birthday balloons, and a decorated cake. Jim Emig, a gregarious restaurant owner who sat with Ao at the trial for Rich's alleged murderer (the case is still pending), wraps

a beefy arm around Ao and kicks off the ceremony. Everyone has a chance to say something about the man so few of them knew. The messages all come down to this: Rich's bequest to his neighbours was his family. And everyone feels honoured to get that gift.

Then the picnic baskets come out, and the cake is cut, kids play, and neighbours catch up. Ao hands out curry she made. She's been expanding her repertoire, mastering Thai and Indian cuisines. Maybe, Margot Madison says, Ao could do some catering.

As people eat and talk, cars travel past. Seeing the festivities, the drivers must think it's some unconventional death observation. Or maybe they recognise it for what it is: friends and family living in this world. **R**

We're Off to See the WIZARD

BY JAY SCARFONE & WILLIAM STILLMAN

For fans of *The Wizard of Oz* the mere mention of MGM's movie masterpiece conjures instant memories: Judy Garland's tender rendition of "Over the Rainbow." The Wicked Witch of the West cackling, "I'll get you, my pretty, and your little dog, too!" Dorothy and her friends dancing down the winding Yellow Brick Road. And how many kids were terrified of those sinister Winged Monkeys?

Since its Hollywood debut on August 15, 1939, more than one billion people have seen Dorothy's whirlwind journey from Kansas to the Land of Oz. No matter how many times we've watched, it's hard not to be awed when the farmhouse door opens on a Technicolor world. Decades later, there's still no place like home...



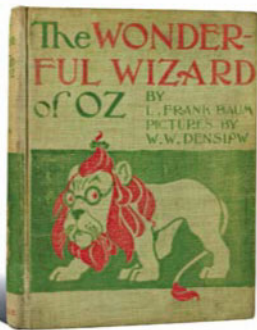
PHOTOS: DR MACRO

*More than a modern
fairy tale, The Wizard
of Oz is one of the best-
loved films of all time*



15 Things You Didn't Know About Oz

1 *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* wasn't Dorothy's only journey to Oz. L. Frank Baum wrote 14 novels and six short stories about her adventures. Recent movies such as *Oz*, *The Great and Powerful* and *Dorothy of Oz* were based on these books. Bradford Press has recreated these elaborately illustrated first editions. Learn more about these replica books at OriginalOz.com.



2



Ray Bolger wore an asbestos version of his Scarecrow costume for the scene in which the Wicked Witch lights him on fire. Men with fire extinguishers stood out of camera range.

3 The 1939 movie is a remake. Two silent film versions preceded it, in 1910 and 1925. The latter starred Oliver Hardy as the character then called the Woodsman.

4 No shade of expensive yellow paint seemed to photograph properly on the Yellow Brick Road – until someone tried an ordinary house paint.



5 The jacket Frank Morgan wore as Professor Marvel came from a thrift shop. MGM spread the story that, by coincidence, the jacket was later found to have belonged to L. Frank Baum.

6 Judy Garland wore a corset throughout filming to give her a younger physique.



7 Judy Garland was 16 years old when filming began. As a minor, she was only permitted by Californian law to work four hours a day.

13

MGM Studios boss Louis B. Mayer bought the rights hoping it would follow the success of Walt Disney's *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937).



14 The caps that the inhabitants of the Emerald City wore caused some extras' hair to fall out.

15 The Wicked Witch's crystal ball has a large zodiac on the floor encircling it. This is considered by many as a homage to the Evil Queen in *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, who has pictures of the zodiac surrounding her magic mirror.



8 Oscar winner Gale Sondergaard (*above*) was originally signed to portray a glamorous Wicked Witch of the West. When MGM realised it would affect the whole plot, actress Margaret Hamilton was cast as a more cantankerous witch.

9 The film cost \$2,777,000 to produce but earned only \$3 million when it was first released.

10 The actors who played the Munchkins were reportedly each paid \$50 per week, while Toto earned \$125 per week.

11 The Emerald City horses had jelly crystals sprinkled over them to give them their colour.

12 Toto, a terrier, was sensitive to noise, and had to be concealed during the filming of the explosion caused by the Wicked Witch's arrival in Munchkin Land.

What's It Worth?

Wizard of Oz collectors are always searching for vintage novelties. See how much these antiques cost today:

Judy Garland as Dorothy Doll

Ideal Novelty & Toy Co. – makers of the wildly popular Shirley Temple doll of the same era – offered the Judy Garland doll in two sizes. The largest, at 45cm (shown here), sold for \$5. Value: In excellent condition with original clothing, **\$1000–\$2500**



Gingham Dress

In November 2012, one of the gingham dresses worn by Judy Garland as Dorothy sold at auction for almost half a million dollars. **\$480,000**

Paper Masks

Einson-Freeman Co. issued a set of five paper masks of the Oz movie characters. The set featured Dorothy, the Scarecrow, the Tin Man, the Cowardly Lion and the Wizard, accompanied by a flier titled “Five Ways to Have Fun at a Hallowe’en Party With Wizard of Oz Masks”. Value: Per mask **\$25–\$50**

Board Game

Whitman Publishing Co. released this item with characters that were hybrids of their depictions in the Oz books and the film. It originally sold for 25 cents. Value: In good condition, complete with linen-paper board, single die and four wooden markers, **\$200–\$500**

Themed Scarves

Brian Fabrics sold rayon Wizard of Oz scarves in two designs and a variety of colours. Value: In good condition without tears or stains, **\$200–\$400**



Ruby Slippers

Each adorned with over 2000 sequins, one of the five surviving pairs of ruby slippers sold for \$666,000 at a Christie’s auction in 2000. **\$666,000**

*Tin Man, Cowardly
Lion, Dorothy and the
Scarecrow meet the
Doorman at the
Emerald City*



Munchausen

BY

Internet

BY CIENNA MADRID FROM THE *STRANGER*



They met online. One was blogging to help cancer survivors like herself. The other was living out a cruel fantasy

VALERIE WAS SITTING on her boyfriend's bed on the morning of September 16, 2010, when she detected what 12% of women will face in their lifetime: a tiny lump in her breast. She didn't panic. She was only 36, ate organic foods, and cycled 160km a week, and her annual breast exam had been lump-free only four months earlier.



But an ultrasound confirmed what Valerie had felt: a pebble-sized mass that turned out to be stage 2A, HER2-positive invasive ductal carcinoma – an aggressive form of breast cancer that requires chemotherapy to treat. The mass was so small, her doctor said it was a miracle she'd noticed it. Then, "when he saw my lymph node, everything changed in the room," Valerie remembers. The cancer had already spread to her left arm.

The following week was a blur of tests and scans, of calling relatives, crying, and adjusting to the abrupt new reality that she might die soon. And if she did live, it would be without her breasts or the possibility of ever getting pregnant. "I think that was probably the hardest to hear – that I could never have children," Valerie says. "I've always wanted to have children."

She had recently moved to Seattle, so her diagnosis was compounded by the fact that most of her loved ones were far away. "I really didn't have an immediate support system beyond my boyfriend and my cats," she says. "The isolation gets to you – you can't get a hug over the phone."

Which is why, only two days after her diagnosis, Valerie began to blog about her battle with cancer. She wanted to keep her family informed about her treatment and, she hoped, find support from someone going through the same struggle she was. She decided to call her Tumblr blog *CatsNotCancer*. Over the next year, Valerie documented her

daily ups and downs: how she named her breasts and the cancerous lymph node she would have removed and how she shaved her hair for *Locks of Love*. *CatsNotCancer* quickly gained more than 2100 followers on Tumblr, and Valerie took the time to respond to everyone who left messages on her blog looking for guidance or empathy.

Cancer And Worse

That's how she met Beth three months later, in December 2010.

"She was a fellow blogger who had introduced herself and said she was going through treatment for lymphoma," Valerie recalls. "I had just undergone my fourth round of chemo, and I was feeling really sick. It was an accomplishment to put up a blog post during the day."

Nevertheless, she responded to Beth's overture, and for the first week, their communication was casual. The 19-year-old from Wisconsin, who appeared healthy in photographs, talked about her struggles balancing lymphoma treatments and college classes (she was studying to become a psychologist), and the two talked about their favourite TV show, *Lost*.

Then one day, Valerie received a note from Beth via Tumblr that read, "Can you get pregnant while on chemo?"

It struck a chord.

"I wrote back and said, 'Well, I can't get pregnant while on chemo ...,' but I admitted that I didn't know her treatment and couldn't know what she was

going through," Valerie says. She urged Beth to contact her oncologist immediately. Instead, Beth messaged again, intimating that she'd gotten pregnant after being raped.

"I immediately sent her my phone number and personal email address and urged her to call me," Valerie says. Beth called in minutes, and the two had their first phone conversation, in which Beth explained that a family member had abused her and her six-year-old cousin. Beth sounded young and painfully shy, and yet "she was almost casual about the whole thing," Valerie says. "She was hesitant to even call what had happened rape."

In an email sent the day after their conversation in December, Beth wrote, "Well, I guess it's rape then, because I did not want that at all. That word is so gross sounding to me. It makes me so angry. Like the whole thing is just gross, but secondly, I could have gotten really sick from that! Inconsiderate." Beth ended the e-mail with: "Blah, blah, rant over lol :)."

It put Valerie on high alert. "I kept thinking *inconsiderate* is one of the last words I'd use to describe rape," she says. Her scepticism grew when she received an email from Beth that read, "Well ... I am officially pregnant. This is my worst nightmare. Horrible. I want to die. I am mortified :("

Mortified?

Despite her growing suspicions, she continued to email Beth. "I was trying to keep an open mind," Valerie explains. "I'd known this girl only a few weeks, and it sounded like she had people in her life mistreating her. I just wanted to offer what support I could."

While Beth emailed daily updates on

"The isolation gets to you – you can't get a hug over the phone," says Valerie

her pregnancy – "Aborting it is what [my doctor] would recommend his daughter to do. He doesn't think I could handle it mentally or physically. Blah blah" – Valerie contacted her own oncologist about what she'd read on Beth's blog. She remembers one post about Beth throwing up

blood between classes and then getting a hefty five-unit blood transfusion before blogging later in the day, which Valerie's doctor said was ridiculous. He also said that a patient with her type of lymphoma would not have the energy to study full-time.

Enter a Second Illness

But Valerie didn't confront Beth with her suspicions. Instead, to preserve her own health and sanity, she stopped answering Beth's emails, texts and phone calls. "Her lying was so alien a concept that the idea of outing her horrified me," she says. "Part of me thought, *There's something wrong with her, and if she is being abused, I don't*

want to make life harder on her.” In response to Valerie’s silence, Beth went ballistic.

Munchausen syndrome takes its name from an 18th-century German noble who satirically embellished tales of his military exploits and inspired a fictional character. It wasn’t until 1951 that Baron Munchausen became associated with one crop of pathological liars: people who go to incredible lengths to fake illness or psychological trauma for the purpose of attracting medical attention and sympathy from others. Munchausen sufferers don’t just shave their heads and say, “It’s cancer!” They alter medical records, starve themselves, install catheters and chemo ports, and even convince doctors to perform surgeries – anything to legitimise the fantasy of their illness. If they fail in one effort, they are likely to try another hospital or illness or audience.

“I’ve encountered two women who’ve lied to their doctors in order to get mastectomies unnecessarily,” says Dr Marc Feldman, a professor of psychiatry at the University of Alabama and the author of *Playing Sick?*. “That’s how desperate their need for hospitalisation and love and attention is.”

There are no reliable statistics on how many people suffer from Munchausen syndrome – partly because it’s hard to get accurate data from people who lie pathologically – but the condition is considered rare.

However, in 2000, Feldman coined

a new term: *Munchausen by Internet*, which refers to a person with Munchausen who builds his or her lies mostly through online interactions. Our natural lie detectors are muted online; we can’t rely on facial expressions and other physical cues for sensing falsehoods, which means we’re prone to fill in the blanks. Online, you can live out your deception without the fear of having your lies challenged in person. And if someone does eventually doubt your story, you can simply log out and find a fresh group of sympathisers.

Trolling Beneath The Surface

This kind of accessibility makes Munchausen by internet “way, way more common than Munchausen ever was or could have been,” says Feldman. And when those lies are exposed, Munchausen by Internet sufferers are likely to become online trolls who anonymously attack the people they’ve come to know through support groups.

Valerie’s silent treatment didn’t deter Beth from contacting her repeatedly, even obsessively, in early 2011. Then emails purportedly from Beth’s abused six-year-old niece started to show up in Valerie’s inbox.

“I’m not supposed to be on Beth’s computer or her e-mail, but I’m really scared :(,” one email read. “She has to go to the hospital now and now she has ambulance and if she dies and all this blood coming from her mouth again and why does this always

happen and the. If she's there for ever than she won't be home when I'm all alone and I will cry: (I'm so scared for her and for me :("

Despite Beth's supposed hospitalisation, she was still blogging frequently, so Valerie chose not to respond. Another day Beth sent her a message: "Did I do something to offend you? If I did, I'm sorry."

"When I didn't respond to even that, she wrote an email to apologise, and I thought she'd leave me alone," Valerie says. "I honestly thought that was the end of it."

Valerie turned her mind to more important things: She was a quarter of the way through chemo treatments, with one mastectomy to come. In the process, she found a virtual support group of ten women, all of whom were undergoing treatment like hers.

They shared each other's daily consolations and desolations. Valerie also consulted with them on taunts she'd been receiving from a troll who called her childish, hurtful names like VolDEMORT and sent messages like "Everyone wants to watch you die."

What could be done? Practically nothing, they told her. "It was a harsh reminder that on the internet, you can say anything you want, and you can pretend to be anyone you want," Valerie says. So she filtered

her messages and, with her friends' encouragement, tried to put the troll out of her mind.

When the hateful messages persisted, she contacted Taryn Harper Wright of the Warrior Eli Hoax Group, a blog that was launched to untangle a hoax about a fictional child named Eli and his internet-documented battle

with cancer. Since then, Wright has investigated other online deceptions.

Using the sender's IP address, the pair tracked 18 months of harassing messages back to a single source: Beth. "I was floored," Valerie says. "Our relationship lasted only a few weeks. I hadn't spoken with her in over a

year. Why would she want to hurt me like that?"

Valerie stopped blogging for good. "You assume when you start treatment that your illness will be over," she says. "But when you've had cancer, it's never over. It follows you for the rest of your life. I can't control that, but I can at least control the impact this woman has on my life – and that's what I intend to do. I intend to lead a happy, full, healthy life." **R**

Valerie finished her chemotherapy treatment in November 2012 and is currently in remission. Her blog CatsNotCancer remains inactive.

"Her lying was so alien a concept that the idea of outing her horrified me"

A woman with red hair is shown in profile, looking out of a train window. She is holding onto a black window frame. The background is a blurred outdoor scene with a person sitting on a bench. The overall tone is warm and contemplative.

ENCOUNTERS

A venture overseas can change attitudes and shatter illusions. Here five travel experts share some surprising inaugurations

FIRST TIMERS

MY FIRST ROMAN HOLIDAY

George Dunford, travel writer and blogger

As if I wasn't worried enough by my first trip overseas, I had to read the section of my Roman guidebook called "Dangers & Annoyances". It clearly told me that the second I got off the train I'd discover "thieves are very active in the area around *Stazione Termini*."

Off the plane I was anticipating robbery. Catching the train in from the airport, I eyed the couple opposite me, convinced they were hardened thieves working this train for chumps who hadn't read the Dangers & Annoyances section. When they pulled out a package I knew it was a trick. I braced myself in case they tried to throw it at me as a distraction. Instead, it was cheese. They ate for a while and saw me staring so they offered me some. It could be poison or, at the very least, a tranquilliser. But I risked it. And the soft milky taste was worth it.

"*Mozzarella di bufala*", the man explained. He told me it was from his hometown, where he and his wife had just flown back from, so they had plenty. He wasn't a thief, just a man proud of his hometown produce.

MY FIRST ENGLISH PATIENTS

Adam Stanford, marketing analyst

It started abruptly. While working at a crappy job in Adelaide, I occasionally surfed teacher websites, more out

of curiosity than actual intent. Then there was an interesting job ad for a small school in central Japan, so I shot off an application. Eighteen days later I landed in Nagoya International Airport, pondering the question, *Do I even like kids?*

It turned out to be more like a passion and I spent a year there teaching kindergarten and primary school kids. Teaching, I quickly discovered, was a great skill to combine with travel; it allowed me to keep my expenses way down while getting a really rich experience of the culture. Who better to show you around town than one of your own students? And no classroom was the same.

In Japan the well-built classrooms were warm enough for me to teach wearing shorts and a T-shirt, unusual in such a formal country. In China, my classroom was only a few degrees above freezing level and my teaching attire was more like snow gear. In Russia I taught summer school and had no classroom at all, instead teaching the kids in the open air.

MY FIRST JUNGLE NIGHT

Jolyon Attwooll, *Lonely Planet* author and previous *Santiago Times* reporter

The jaguars didn't bother me much during the day. Adonis, our local guide who was leading us deep into the Guatemalan jungle, assured us they were elusive, shy creatures. The

most recent time he had seen one was more than a year ago when he had surprised a pair in the act of jaguar love. Last week, he had spotted some jaguar spoor, which was probably about as close to the animals as we would get, he said.

But his reassurance meant little that night as I cowered in my hammock under the Central American stars. Now my mind turned every rustle into a prowling big cat full of murderous intent (probably to get back at the rude human who had interrupted a moment of feline passion). And, if it wasn't a jaguar poised to spring, it was a poisonous fer-de-lance viper, picking which of my buttocks to sink its fangs into.

Tiredness calmed my overactive imagination and I dozed. Next day, big surprise: no death by either snake bite or jaguar mauling. We packed up our stuff and continued toward our destination, El Mirador, the site of the tallest temple in the Mayan world.

Although we may have questioned why we had left a perfectly nice beach to come here, that night no doubts remained. Just before sunset we took our places at the top of the unexcavated temple mound. A Mayan astrology priest had probably sat in the same place 2000 years before and honed his knowledge of the galaxy. Tonight, as with every night, spectacular pink shades streaked the western skyline. The sky darkened and, one by one, the stars shimmered into life.

MY FIRST FRANKFURTER

Brian Thacker, travel writer and author of *Sleeping Around: A Couch Surfing Tour of the Globe*

When I stepped out of Frankfurt airport as a young, naïve backpacker on my first “big trip” overseas, I noticed a couple of people dressed as clowns. In the underground train station I saw two more clowns drinking from large bottles of beer. Sitting opposite me on the train was another clown having an animated conversation with a court jester. I had no idea what was going on. My first thought was that because Europe is a season ahead in fashion this was the latest look. It was no laughing matter, though. When a rather intoxicated clown gave me a big bear hug I started to get a little freaked.

By the time I hit the streets after checking into my hotel most of the clown population in Frankfurt seemed to be rolling drunk, which meant there were a lot of very happy clowns. When I finally got the courage to ask someone what was going on, I found out that the Germans weren't clown fetishists after all. It was actually part of an ancient festival called *Fasching* and, as well as dressing up, people danced, sang and drank massive steins of beer for three days straight.

I ended up having the most marvelous time and, by midnight of my first day in Europe, I had three clowns, an ape and a nun as my new best friends.

MY FIRST PASSAGE TO INDIA

Rose Mulready, writer

I was expecting to come out of the airport doors in Mumbai and disappear in a locust crowd of beggars and taxi drivers. Everyone I knew had told me that my first few minutes would be terrifying. They made it sound as if I would have to fight to keep hold of my luggage, possibly lose an eye.

Instead, when I turned up in Mumbai after midnight, I found the airport all but deserted. I prepaid for a taxi at a booth and easily found my driver, and we set out for the city. Again I was surprised – where were all the people? Mumbai at night was a city of men and dogs. Men lying in the street, riding motorbikes, smoking cigarettes – but nothing like the jumbled hordes I'd been led to expect.

All night outside my window there was the soft music of bicycle bells. In the morning, I heard female voices

and rushed to the window to see three women in bright saris – fuchsia, turquoise, daffodil – crossing the road.

I'd arrived in the city with a gruesome cold (ironically the only illness I would suffer in a year of Indian travel) so I spent my first day dazed in bed, watching Bollywood clips on MTV Asia and reading. When I finally ventured out in the streets, the first person to approach me was a street vendor who tried to sell me a giant dropsical balloon, almost bigger than I was. This made me laugh. "A smaller balloon?" he countered swiftly. Ah, the real India at last. **R**

This is an extract from Lonely Planet's *The Big Trip*, published by Lonely Planet © May 2015. RRP US\$21.99



BEST NEWSPAPER CORRECTIONS

From the *Guardian*: "In the caption for a picture showing one of the ten largest stars found so far (by Earth-dwellers), we erred in saying that it was 'One of the ten biggest objects yet to be found in the solar system.' As a number of readers pointed out, there is only one star in the solar system: the sun." PASADENASTARNEWS.COM

From the *New York Times*: "An earlier version of this article misidentified the number of years E.B. White wrote for the *New Yorker*. It was five decades, not centuries." BUZZFEED.COM

Life's Like That

SEEING THE FUNNY SIDE

From the Archives

What further introduction is required for this 60-year-old letter from August 1955 other than: wow.

The Berlin-Dresden express was roaring along toward Leipzig through a barren countryside, the wasteland of the Soviet Zone. In my carriage was one other person, a man with a Communist Party badge on his lapel. After a while he fell asleep, so I cautiously pulled out of my pocket my magazine – The Reader's Digest. (Possession of free-world magazines behind the Iron Curtain is discouraged by long sentences in slave-labour camps.)

Suddenly I sensed something, and looking up found the man wide

awake and glowering at me; then without a word he got up and looked out of the door of the compartment. The police ride every train that leaves Berlin – he was going to call them in!

But, after some minutes, hours to me, the man returned to his corner, smiled and drew from his pocket – his Reader's Digest.

SUBMITTED BY "HORST", BERLIN

NOT-SO-GOOD SAMARITAN

When I saw an elderly woman struggling to get her walker out of the car, I jumped into action. I grabbed the walker by the handles and tussled with it until it came out. Then I opened the



collapsed legs, put them in the locked position and placed the walker in front of her. Voila!

"Thank you," she said. "But I was just trying to put it into the car."

SUBMITTED BY RICHARD PARISEAU

TRAIN ILLUSTRATION: GETTY IMAGES. PHOTOS: THINKSTOCK

SPEECHLESS

Wandering inside a pet store, I stopped in front of a birdcage to admire a parakeet. We watched each other for a few minutes before it asked, "Can't you talk?"

SUBMITTED BY
SHIRLEY BROWN



SMART ANIMAL

My three-year-old son was playing hide-and-seek with his father. He turned to the dog and said, "Dixie, hide!"

When the dog didn't obey, he complained, "Dixie won't hide!" His father explained that the dog didn't understand – that hiding was too complicated.

My son turned to the dog and said, "OK. Dixie, you count."

SUBMITTED BY LAURA CROFT

MARKING TIME

Recently, I asked a little boy how old he was, and he held up four fingers.

"And when will you be five? I enquired.

"When I hold up the other finger," he retorted.

SUBMITTED BY STEPHANIE THOMAS



The Great Tweet-off: Survival Edition

Twitter feed @TwopTwips is bursting with handy hints on staying sane in this modern world. Here are some faves:

Lonely? Cut your bread into a hand shape so you get a high five when it pops up in the toaster.

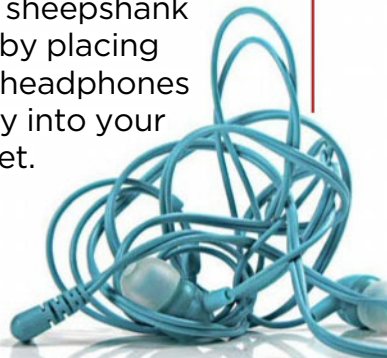
Meet women in your area by turning off your computer and walking out the door onto the street.

Give geeks a panic attack by sitting in a deckchair with a thermos outside an Apple store at midnight.

Give your photos that James Bond feel by taking them through a toilet roll tube.

Parents: get rid of telemarketers by handing the phone to your toddler and telling them it's Santa.

Quickly learn how to tie a double hitch sheepshank knot by placing your headphones briefly into your pocket.





Butch the Rottweiler saved the day many times – and even put his own life in jeopardy for the job

A Cracker of a Dog

BY VIKKI PETRAITIS
FROM *THE DOG SQUAD*

OF THE 37 YEARS Sergeant Trevor Studham was a member of Australia's Victoria Police, he spent 34 of them in the Dog Squad. He had been a farmer for a decade before he joined the police force, and had kept border collies as cattle dogs. Training working dogs was in his blood. Trevor knew

that not all dogs have the ability to be working dogs. The dogs that made it had a natural ability and did the job for the love of it.

When a vacancy was advertised for the fledgling Dog Squad, Trevor applied. He had spent some time with police dog handlers in the line of duty,

and their job sounded interesting. Trevor fronted a board and was accepted into the new squad as part of the sixth intake of recruits.

Over the years Trevor had eight or nine dogs, but the stand-out was a Rottweiler called Butch.

Trevor hadn't trained a Rottweiler before. On the first night Trevor took Butch home, the dog sat with him while he did some weight training in the shed. When Trevor's wife, Maree, came to the door, the dog flew at her and bit her. Trevor called him off, and the dog stood down straight away. Luckily Maree was only a little bruised from the bite, and looked on the positive side. "When that happened, I knew Trevor would be fine with Butch looking out for him," she said later.

After that incident, Butch was always a police dog, but never a family dog; he didn't mix with Trevor's children, or associate with anyone but his handler. Butch, it seemed, was a one-man dog.

Trevor got Butch when he was 18 months old and, unlike some police dogs at that age, he was fully mature in his attitude. Butch was a ready-made police dog.

Despite Butch's enthusiasm for the job, Trevor always had to be in

charge. A dog – especially a Rottweiler – needs to be controlled at all times. If Trevor and Butch were tracking and a member of the public stepped in front of them, Trevor needed to be able to command – "Stop! Down!" – and Butch needed to obey immediately. From the start, Butch looked to Trevor for a command. Sometimes their communication would be visual – just a look, and the dog seemed to know what to do. Trevor's attitude as a trainer varied little from his days on the farm training cattle dogs. He simply expected Butch to do the job, and Butch never let him down.

Butch was classified as a critical incident dog. That meant he was called to jobs when the offender

presented a real threat. Once a critical incident dog identifies a target, nothing stops the dog from taking them down. Throughout his ten-year career Butch only disarmed about a dozen offenders. On most occasions, his mere presence could end a situation.

Trevor knew that without police dogs,

situations could easily turn pear-shaped. Not only did the dogs offer a chance at a non-lethal solution, they also created a barrier between armed offenders and other uniformed police



Sometimes their communication would be visual – just a look, and the dog seemed to know what to do ... Butch never let him down

officers at the scene. Of course, Trevor felt the pressure at each of these knife-wielding jobs, but with Butch by his side he knew he was safe.

In the early to mid-1990s there was a spate of police shootings in Victoria and the media shone a spotlight on each new incident. What the public didn't realise was that a number of the shootings occurred when people with psychiatric illnesses came at police in violent, life-threatening encounters. It was the Dog Squad that often formed the barrier between the mentally ill person and lethal force.

In July 1998, Trevor gave a lecture to the Cranbourne Rotary Club about the work of the Dog Squad. Butch lay on the stage during the talk, looking the picture of a polite and well-trained police dog.

Afterwards, as the pair headed off to begin his shift, they were called to a siege situation in Williamstown. A male offender was inside a shop armed with a knife. There were other general purpose dogs at the scene, but Butch was needed because he was a critical incident dog.

Trevor was briefed at the scene. The armed man had a history of violent psychotic episodes. The situation was fraught – police cars everywhere, blue and red flashing police lights, the road closed to traffic and pedestrians. The police had set up a perimeter between the footpath and the road. The man, who lived in premises at the back of

the shop, would come out every now and again armed with a knife and a tomahawk. He would wave them around, threaten police and demand they shoot him.

Trevor set up at the front of the shop while another handler, who also had a critical incident dog, set up at the back. Each time the man came out, ranting and taunting them, the police officers tried to read his demeanour and aggression. *He's setting himself up to be shot*, thought Trevor.

At any moment, this man could charge towards the police surrounding him. There was little space between the footpath at the front of the shop and the road where uniformed members stood behind police cars.

After a couple of hours, the man dropped the knife and tomahawk on the footpath and ran back into the shop. The watching police quickly removed the weapons. The man kept going in and out of the shop, ranting and screaming that he wanted to die. "If I attack you," he screamed at the police negotiator, "you would have to shoot me! I'm going inside to prepare to die!"

That was the trigger.

The officer in charge decided to try and catch the man off guard by sending in Trevor and Butch. Standing at the door, Trevor took a deep breath and entered the shop with Butch on a short lead. Leaving their dogs in their cars, two other handlers came in behind Trevor. It was a good tactic

– if anything happened to Trevor, the extra handlers could step in and control the dog.

Moving quickly and quietly through the dark shop, the three men and Butch headed out the back. They went through an adjoining lounge room before sighting the man in a kitchen beyond. The man wielded two knives – one in each hand. “Drop the knives!” yelled Trevor.

“Come and get ‘em,” said the man, eyes alight with menace. He dropped his arms to his sides and began to advance towards the three police officers. As soon as the man moved towards them, Trevor released the dog.

In a blur of black and tan, Butch flew towards the man and grabbed his left leg. The offender went down quickly, with Butch clamped to his leg. The two other handlers jumped in to help disarm the man.

It was then that Trevor noticed his dog was bleeding. Badly. “He’s got him!” Trevor yelled. He felt Butch’s neck. Trevor could feel the blood pumping from a stab wound. Despite his injuries, Butch would not let go of the man’s leg until called off.

Trevor quickly called for Butch to release the man and left his fellow handlers to put the handcuffs on.

He kept his hand firmly on Butch’s neck, trying to stem the flow of blood. As soon as the offender was safely restrained, the ambulance officers rushed in.

The paramedics quickly took in the scene – a badly injured police dog and an injured offender. Even though they would cop flack afterwards, the ambos treated the injured police dog first. One produced a pressure bandage from a medical kit and wrapped

it firmly around Butch’s neck. Once that was done, Trevor put his bloodied hand back over the injury to keep the pressure on it.

Together with one of the other handlers, Trevor carried Butch, who was panting and silent, to a waiting police car. Trevor climbed into the back seat with his injured dog, never letting

go of the pressure bandage.

The Western Animal Emergency Centre was the closest place to take Butch in the small hours of the morning. All the way there – light flashing, siren blaring – Trevor nursed his dog, scared he would lose him.

Butch didn’t move, and lay still on Trevor. He was so calm that Trevor thought the worst. There had been so much blood.

Police at the scene had contacted the Animal Emergency Centre and

“

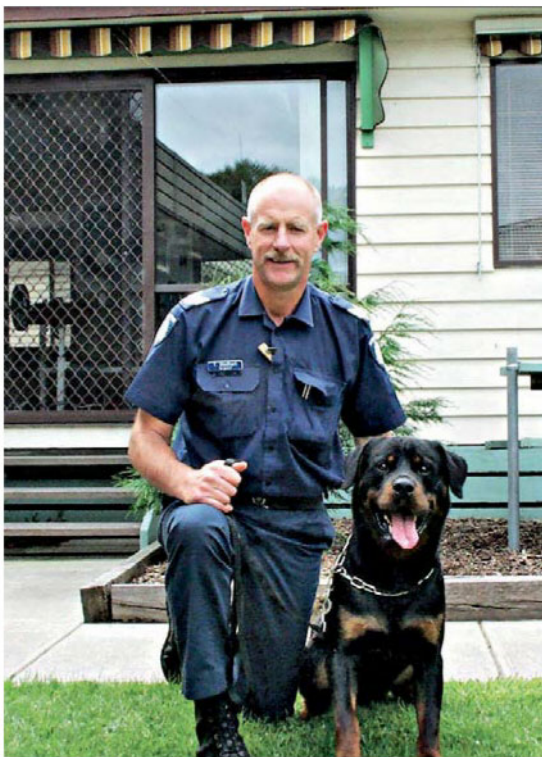
Butch flew towards the man and grabbed his left leg ... the two other handlers jumped in to help disarm the man

Dr Kate Hopper was waiting in the car park with other vet staff and a trolley. Trevor's panic was balanced by Hopper's calm. Butch was wheeled into an examination room, and the vet began her examination in a slow, methodical way.

She removed his bloody bandage so she could look at the dog's injuries. Trevor took a final look at Butch, lying still on the trolley, and then the shaken dog handler left his dog to the experts.

In the waiting room, Trevor rang the boss at the Dog Squad to tell him what had taken place. This was the first time such a serious injury had happened to a Victoria Police dog, and it left all the handlers stunned. While they all knew the jeopardy their dogs faced, this was a sobering reminder.

Half an hour later, Hopper came out and told Trevor that Butch's carotid artery had been severed, but they had been able to sew it up. Butch had received a blood transfusion, and should be fine. Trevor let out a deep breath. It was a great relief to hear Butch would survive.



Sergeant Trevor Studham with his Rottweiler partner, Butch

Trevor left his dog at the Animal Emergency Centre and went back to the Dog Squad offices to sleep for the couple of hours remaining of the cold July night.

At seven the following morning the media began calling the Squad. Trevor knew it would happen, but played dumb on the phone. With the

blood of this injured sidekick staining his police uniform, the last thing Trevor wanted to do was talk to the media about it. “Nope, I don’t know anything about an injured police dog. You’ll have to call back later when the bosses are in.”

Butch spent a couple of days in the hospital, and then came home to Trevor’s house to a bed in the laundry. “Keep him quiet,” the vet had said.

Easier said than done, thought Trevor, thinking of his Rottweiler’s boundless, fearless energy. Just as the vet predicted, Butch was back at work three weeks later, fit as a fiddle.

On Blue Ribbon Day, Butch and Trevor were flown into Waverley Park Football Ground and recognised for their bravery before the start of the Hawthorn-St Kilda game. And Butch and Trevor were presented with a big trophy at the Royal Melbourne Show, which stands proudly in a glass case at the entrance to the Dog Squad. Butch never knew what all the fuss was

“

Butch was back at work three weeks later ... he never knew what all the fuss was about; he had just been doing his job

about; he had just been doing his job.

Butch was a no-fuss, good all-round police dog. He served ten years in the Victoria Police Dog Squad, retiring at 11-and-a-half years of age. When Butch got too old for active duty Trevor got a new Rottweiler, and Butch was a good role model.

Because of the inherent

competition between dogs, the new dog picked up retrieving skills much more quickly than he otherwise would have.

Even though the new dog was good, Trevor believed what a lot of handlers believe: in your career, you get one cracker of a dog. And Butch was his. **R**

Extract from *The Dog Squad* by Vikki Petraitis. Published by Michael Joseph. Available as an ebook.



* * *

OVERHEARD IN LONDON

“Oh, these days you can definitely do parenting from an iPad.”

“I know my lefts, I just don’t know my rights.”

“Aggressively nestling the trolley back into the trolley snake makes me feel like I’m on Robot Wars.” TWITTER FEED #WORDONTHESTREET

Points to Ponder

DO CELL PHONES cause cancer? I don't know. I'm a humanities major. I don't know how a toaster works. I do know that I'm sitting on my couch with an iPhone in my pocket and a MacBook on my lap ... But I'm even more concerned by the fact that I probably wouldn't move either device out of reach even if science confirms my darkest dystopian paranoia.

DAVE PELL,
writer, in Medium

OUR SENSE OF "WE" has shrivelled. Now when people talk about "our kids," they talk about their own biological kids; they don't think about all kids. This leads to a situation that's bad for the economy and bad for democracy. But it's also just not right. We have an obligation to care for other people's kids too.

ROBERT PUTNAM,
social commentator

THERE USED TO BE A TIME when if someone was living their life a different way than you, you'd just say, "Well, that's not my cup of tea." You wouldn't create policy around it.

SARAH SILVERMAN,
comedian, in Rolling Stone

MY PAINTING TEACHER in high school used to say, "I can't paint like I want to, but through practise, I'll get better." But I don't think that's true. I think sometimes you just can't paint.

ELLIE KEMPER,
actress, in Details

DO NOT FALL for the lie that ambition is counter to femininity. What creature is stronger and more motivated than a mother protecting her children? Use that feminine strength. It's a huge asset.

KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND,
US senator, in her book, Off the Sidelines

When the uncreative tell
the creative what to do, it
stops being art.

TONY BENNETT, *singer, in Esquire*

PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES





We get very attached to our rules in English.

Sometimes they help, sometimes they hinder, and sometimes you just need to take a lead from Elsa, says chief subeditor **Donyale Harrison**

Let It Go

I WAS WALKING TO WORK when I heard, then saw them. Two little girls, about six, both dressed as Elsa, singing “Let it Go” very loudly and badly. Behind them trotted what had to be a brother, as he had that eyerolling disgust only a sibling can manage. I was about to grin at him in shared *Frozen* overload sympathy, when he lost his cool. “You’re doing it WRONG!” he shouted, before launching into a pitch-perfect version.

I sometimes feel we approach language not unlike that little boy, more upset with missed notes than with the joy in the singing. I know it took me years to come to grips with people using “fulsome” to mean “lots”. And our editor-in-chief has a little eye twitch when people say less instead of fewer. But we’re seeking help. The truth of the matter is that some things have changed, some don’t matter, and some were never rules anyway.

Moving With the Times

Often, the meaning of words just changes over time. *Enormity* is a good example. The word derived from the Latin *enormitas*, meaning a transgression, and in English it meant the “extreme scale or seriousness of something bad or morally wrong” according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*. So you would say of a mass murderer that “citizens were shocked by the enormity of his crimes.”

But the word sounds very much like *enormous*, and so has come to have a second, more common meaning of just “very large”. Some may point to this as a clear sign of Society In Decay, but English speakers have been doing it for over 200 years without civilisation collapsing.

It's a similar story for *fulsome*, with “fulsome praise” once meaning “excessively flattering” and now just as often meaning “a lot of praise”. The problem is that both are meanings with lots of history. It started off in Middle English meaning *plump and full*, morphed into *overstuffed* by the 17th century, and was used mostly in a negative sense from the late 1600s to the late 1900s. It's one of those tricky words where you need to be really certain from context what the user meant.

This happens more than you might think. Some of our most common words have flipped meaning altogether: *nice* once meant *silly* and *silly* once meant *blessed*. And most of

us are old enough to remember when cool was hot and hot was really cool.

But I Know What You Mean

There are a lot of words that many people do use “wrongly”. *Fewer* and *less* are the classic pair: the rule is that fewer should be used when referring to something that can be counted (“I have fewer shoes than Jack does”) while less is for amounts that can't be numbered (“I have less interest in shoes.”)

Yet in many shops you'll see “10 items or less” aisles, and even news-readers say “Less than 50 people have been found”. Technically, it is wrong, but does it really matter? The meaning is still obvious.

It's like *irregardless*, which is the word *regardless* with an extra “ir”. It's not an official word – regardless already means what irregardless would – but it is obvious what the person is trying to say. Same with people who use *decimate* to describe something other than killing one in ten. There are so few Roman legionaries around these days that I suspect we can move on from the original meaning.

Which isn't to say that it's not a fine thing to be precise. It's just that concentrating on a lack of precision rather than whether you understand what's written can veer into pedantry and may cause premature frown lines.

I sympathise with those who flinch when it comes to *literally* being used to mean anything other than literally,

even if some dictionaries have added “figuratively” to their list of definitions. But it’s usually easy to spot: “I literally exploded!” would have to come through a medium if meant traditionally.

You’re Making That Up

Some “rules” really aren’t. Infinitives (to run, to see, etc.) shouldn’t be split in Latin, but there’s no such rule in English: *Star Trek*’s “to boldly go” is perfectly fine.

Similarly, aside from the fact it will irritate a handful of teachers, there’s no reason not to end a sentence in a preposition (about, of, for, to, off, on, with). It’s just another holdover from the days when Latin shared schoolrooms with English and people tried to force its rules onto the younger language.

Ending with a preposition is often the only way to construct a sentence in a way that sounds “normal.” “Who’s he with?” sounds like friends talking; “With whom is he fraternising?” sounds like a magistrate interrogating. Many people say “What’s he on about?” while only characters in 19th century novels would ask: “On what topic is he expostulating?”

And it’s fine to start a sentence, or even a paragraph, with a conjunction. But it does create a relaxed tone, so keep it for writing that doesn’t need to be formal.

Worth Fighting For

Despite recommending a more relaxed attitude as a recipe for both lower

blood pressure and occasional delight (whenever I read of a politician I dislike receiving “fulsome applause,” I giggle), most of us have words we still fight to protect.

For me, it’s *disinterested*, meaning not having a stake in a topic and therefore unbiased, and *uninterested*, meaning not caring about the topic. Their meanings are so usefully distinct that I find it distressing when people blur them. A disinterested jury will guarantee you a fair trial; an uninterested jury might spend all their time daydreaming.

Why fight this battle and not the others? In all the other cases, the shifts in meaning are usually clear. New words have risen up to fill gaps – snarky applause may not be identical to fulsome, but it’s definitely a fraternal twin, just as egregious does a lot of the heavy lifting enormity used to do. For disinterested, though, there is no other single word that does the job.

And if you still want to take a marker pen to “10 items or less” signs, I really can’t blame you. But for the sake of orderly behaviour in supermarkets, I think we need to accept that, like my attempted ban on *Frozen* references in the magazine this issue, sometimes we just need to let it go ... **R**

Which words are you prepared to fight for? Or what ones do you think people should let go? See page 6 for details on how to share your passions.



The Danger of Eating Late at Night

BY DR JAMIE A. KOUFMAN FROM THE *NEW YORK TIMES*

TYPICAL WAS the restaurateur who came to see me [at my New York practise] with symptoms of heartburn – as well as postnasal drip, sinus disease, hoarseness and a chronic cough. He reported that he always left his restaurant at 11pm. After he arrived home, he would eat dinner and then go to bed.

His problem was acid reflux – an epidemic that affects as many as 40% of Americans. Other countries are also reporting a marked increase in recent decades.

I specialise in the diagnosis and management of acid reflux, especially

“silent” airway reflux, which often affects the throat, sinuses and lungs without digestive symptoms like heartburn. Reflux can lead to oesophageal cancer, which has increased by about 500% since the 1970s. The drugs we use to treat reflux, called proton pump inhibitors, don’t always work and may even increase the risk of developing oesophageal cancer when used long term, according to a Danish study.

What is responsible for these disturbing developments? For one, our poor diet, with its huge increases in the consumption of sugar, fat, soft drinks and processed foods. But

another important variable has been overlooked: dinnertime. Over the past two decades, the time of my patients' evening meals has trended later and later. Dinner – already pushed back by longer work hours – is often further delayed by activities such as shopping and exercise.

In my experience, the single most important intervention for reflux is to eliminate late eating.

For my patients, eating late is often accompanied by overindulging because many skip breakfast and consume only a sandwich at lunch. Thus the evening meal becomes the largest meal of the day. After that heavy meal, it's off to the sofa to watch television. But after eating, it's important to stay upright because gravity helps keep food in the stomach. Reflux is the result of acid spilling out of the stomach; lying down with a full stomach makes reflux much more likely. In a healthy young person, the stomach normally takes a few hours to empty after a moderate-size meal. In older people or those who have reflux, gastric emptying is often delayed.

And if you add an after-dinner dessert or a bedtime snack? Again, reflux is a natural consequence. Dessert kilojoules tend to be high in carbohydrates and fat, and high-fat foods often create reflux by slowing digestion and relaxing the stomach valve that normally prevents the condition. If your reflux is the silent

variety, it's easy to mistake for such conditions as sinusitis, allergies, and asthma.

Some of my reflux patients already eat well. For them, dining too late is often the sole cause of their problem. And yet, changing the timing of their meals is a challenge they struggle to meet.

A patient with reflux came to see me because her father and uncle died of oesophageal cancer, and she was afraid of getting it too. Her nightly routine included a 9pm dinner with at least two bottles of good red wine for the table. The reflux was serious, and changes were needed.

She listened, then did not come back to see me for a year. "For the first two months, I just hated you," she told me, "and then for the next two months – I was having some trouble swallowing – I figured I was going to die of oesophageal cancer." Then she nudged me and added, "You know, we're the reason that it's not so easy to get 6pm reservations at the good restaurants anymore."

To stop the remarkable increase in reflux disease, we have to stop eating at least three hours before bed. For many people, eating dinner early is a significant lifestyle shift. It will require healthy, well-planned breakfasts, lunches and snacks.

As for my restaurateur patient? I told him to eat dinner before 7pm. Within six weeks, his reflux was gone. **R**

5-MINUTE
BRIEFING

Capital Punishment

BY HAZEL FLYNN

START AT THE BEGINNING: Capital punishment is the official, state-sanctioned killing of a person convicted of a criminal offence. Countries whose legal systems allow for this have 'the death penalty'. Worldwide we're moving away from this form of punishment, enacted since ancient times. But some countries remain committed to it despite often passionate opposition.

41

Countries known to have carried out capital punishment in 1995

22

Countries known to have done so in 2014

FOR

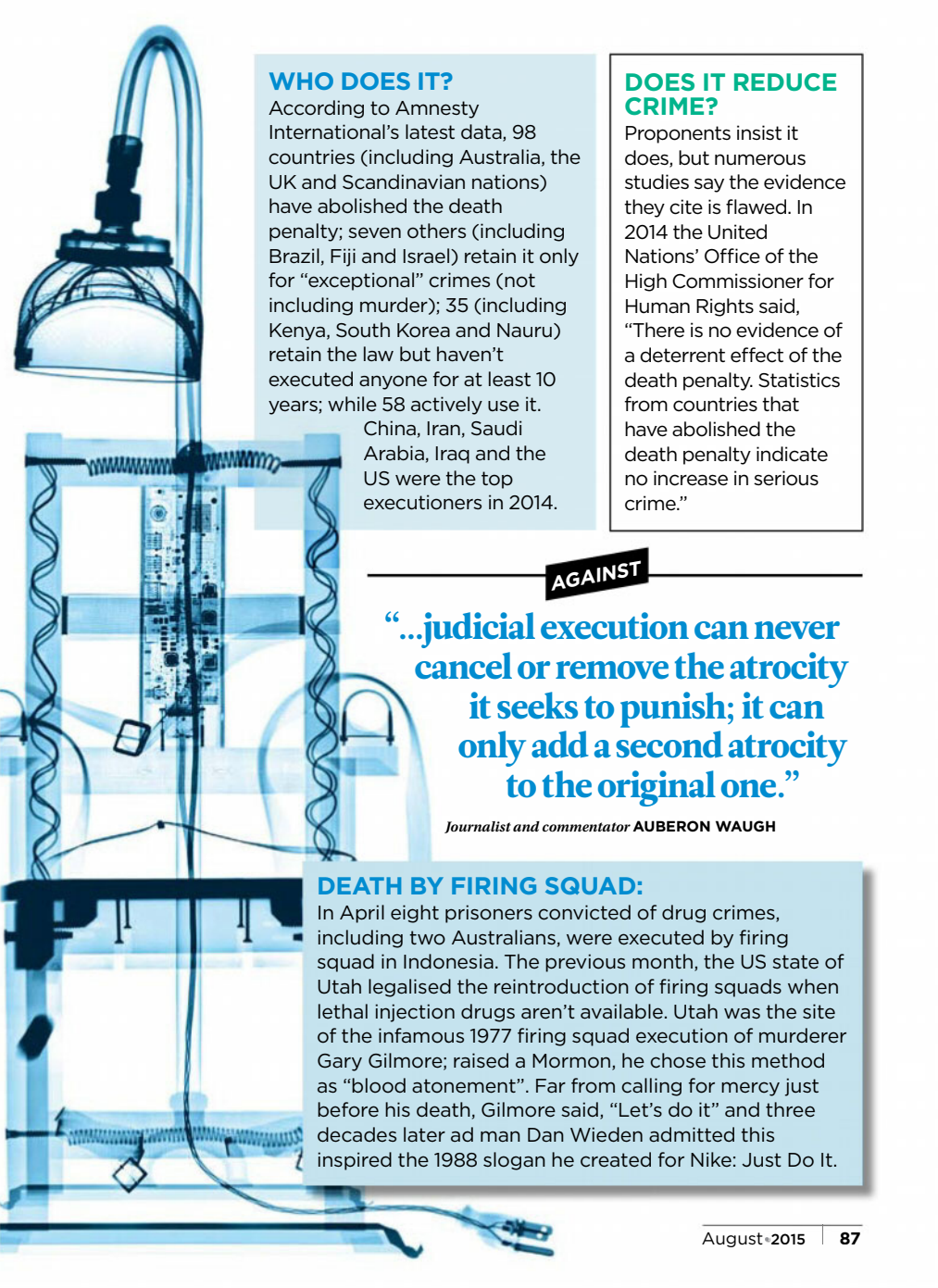
"... capital punishment is a deterrent against future violence and will save other innocent lives"

Future US President **GEORGE W BUSH**, *when he was governor of Texas*

WHAT'S CHANGED OVER TIME?

As a species we've been horribly inventive regarding capital punishment. The Romans used different methods for different crimes – those who committed parricide (killing one's parents or a close family member), for instance, were sealed inside a bag with a dog, ape, rooster and viper and drowned. Burning at the stake was used in Europe and North America. And for hundreds of years English and Japanese traitors were hung, drawn and quartered, which often included live disembowelling. Advocates of capital punishment insist today's methods, notably lethal injection, are far more humane.

PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES



WHO DOES IT?

According to Amnesty International's latest data, 98 countries (including Australia, the UK and Scandinavian nations) have abolished the death penalty; seven others (including Brazil, Fiji and Israel) retain it only for "exceptional" crimes (not including murder); 35 (including Kenya, South Korea and Nauru) retain the law but haven't executed anyone for at least 10 years; while 58 actively use it.

China, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Iraq and the US were the top executioners in 2014.

DOES IT REDUCE CRIME?

Proponents insist it does, but numerous studies say the evidence they cite is flawed. In 2014 the United Nations' Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights said, "There is no evidence of a deterrent effect of the death penalty. Statistics from countries that have abolished the death penalty indicate no increase in serious crime."

AGAINST

"...judicial execution can never cancel or remove the atrocity it seeks to punish; it can only add a second atrocity to the original one."

Journalist and commentator **AUBERON WAUGH**

DEATH BY FIRING SQUAD:

In April eight prisoners convicted of drug crimes, including two Australians, were executed by firing squad in Indonesia. The previous month, the US state of Utah legalised the reintroduction of firing squads when lethal injection drugs aren't available. Utah was the site of the infamous 1977 firing squad execution of murderer Gary Gilmore; raised a Mormon, he chose this method as "blood atonement". Far from calling for mercy just before his death, Gilmore said, "Let's do it" and three decades later ad man Dan Wieden admitted this inspired the 1988 slogan he created for Nike: Just Do It.



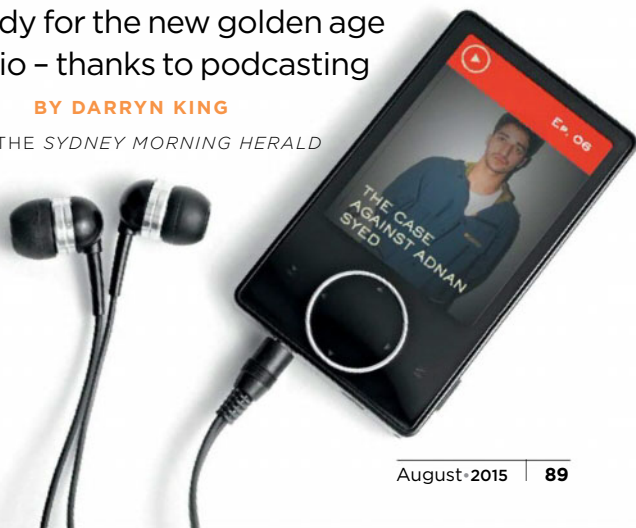


How Murder Rescued the Radio Star

Get ready for the new golden age
of audio – thanks to podcasting

BY DARRYN KING

FROM THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD



Listening to the voices in your head has never been so popular. More people than ever are plugged into podcasts, tuning in to hear expert advice on everything from spelling (*Grammar Girl*) to sex (*The Savage Lovecast*); pop culture (*Slate Culture Gabfest*) or pop science (*Radiolab*). There are podcasts for shoptalk on filmmaking (*The Treatment*) and songwriting (*Sodajerker*). Comedians chat up comedians on Marc Maron's *WTF* and wrestlers chat up wrestlers on *Art of Wrestling*.

"We're at the dawn of a golden age of audio," says Alex Blumberg, former producer of the podcast *This American Life* and presenter of *StartUp*, a podcast series that documents his launch of podcast network Gimlet.

"For the first time in history, we're constantly connected to devices that can play on-demand audio. All the hours in the day are available for listening now that we have smartphones – the trip to the bank, running out for groceries, your workout, all those times that you're doing something that's somewhat mindless – that's a lot of extra hours that people are looking to fill."

Since its public radio beginnings in 1995, *This American Life* has become widely celebrated as the pinnacle of the form.

With a chatty and personable style, its roving reporters and raconteurs have shared stories large (Hurricane Katrina, the economic crisis) and small (an audiobook narrator getting trapped in a wardrobe). The success of the podcast has led to a TV show, film rights being sold, live stage shows, and the celebrity status of host Ira Glass.

More recently, the programme has spawned its own stratospherically successful spin-off; chances are even if you haven't heard the *Serial* podcast, you've heard about it on news and current affairs shows.

Whereas *This American Life* serves up a new theme from week to week and a variety of stories in each episode, *Serial* is a deep dive into a single compelling story over an entire season. In the first series, the true-crime mystery followed reporter Sarah Koenig as she investigated the 1999 murder of a high-school girl in Baltimore, US, a crime for which the student's ex-boyfriend, Adnan Syed, has been serving a life sentence.

***Serial* is a deep dive into a single compelling story over an entire season**

It is the podcast that launched a thousand think pieces, many of them proclaiming podcasting is finally going mainstream. *Serial* is inspiring the kind of dialogue, dissection and devotion usually reserved for acclaimed cable television series. There are podcasts



The Serial team are killing it on the ratings: (left to right): Dana Chivvis, Emily Condon, Sarah Koenig, Ira Glass and Julie Snyder

dedicated to recaps of the podcast. Not to mention the real-world implications that may qualify as spoilers. Ears everywhere are transfixed.

“Serial is the page-turner of podcasts,” says Jeffrey Cranor, co-founder of the *Welcome to Night Vale* podcast, which parodies community radio. “It’s started a conversation about podcasts being for everyone, not just so-called podcast audiences. It’s bringing a lot of new people into the fold.”

Episodic storytelling feels like a logical development in the age of audio-on-demand. But it also recalls a time when families used to regularly gather around the radio as their

primary form of home entertainment. Cranor goes even further, suggesting that the medium taps into ancient storytelling traditions.

“I listened to a lot of radio growing up, so there’s no question that radio had an influence on me,” Cranor says. “But when we started talking about creating *Night Vale*, we were thinking of even older forms than radio; the classic idea of theatre in the form of an individual storyteller. You can trace it back to Homer or early humankind. There’s something about just sitting around and having a story told to you.”

Blumberg, who worked on *This American Life* during the making

of the TV show and worked in print earlier in his career, agrees there is an inherent power in purely verbal, non-visual storytelling. Only part of it is to do with the fact that, a lot of the time, the voice of the storyteller is emanating, conscience-like, from within one's own ears.

"The gift of audio is that it's better at creating intimacy and emotional connection," says Blumberg. "Radio can do what reality TV set out to do, but actually do it better. In 'reality radio', you can just be embedded with someone who is wrestling with something internally, and talking about it with their wife" – many such scenes, between Blumberg and his wife, are woven into *StartUp* – "and that can be just as dramatic."

Any avid listener of *Serial* or *This American Life* will be familiar with the impact of well-placed silence. When Ira Glass confronted monologist Mike Daisey about the factual inaccuracies of a story Daisey told in a previous episode, the expanding ellipsis – despite or even because of the general aversion to dead air on the radio – made for gripping listening.

Part of the appeal of the podcast, says Blumberg, is that it allows the audience to control what they listen to, in a way that is impossible with traditional radio.

Podcasts are perfect for listening when you

- can't sleep
- are walking or working out
- want an alternative to "live" radio
- are on holiday
- commute or spend time travelling
- are convalescing.



The next Youtube?
Gimlet CEO Alex Blumberg

"People ask me who my competitors are," Blumberg says, "but I think everybody who's making this kind of stuff, we're all collaborators in a certain way right now. We're in a rising tide, which is a fortunate place to be in."

"Podcasting is going to become as mainstream as radio. Because why wouldn't you want to listen to exactly

what you want to listen to?" **R**

The second series of *Serial* – on a whole new topic – is due to air later this year with the date as yet unannounced, with a third series in production.

For the status of Adnan Syed's appeal against his life sentence, go to undisclosed-podcast.com.

READER'S DIGEST GUIDE TO PODCASTS

IT'S EASY TO GET STARTED

For a simple introduction, watch this lovely video made by Ira Glass and his friend Mary. Mary is “on the dark side” of 85, and she’ll convince you podcasts are life changing. <http://serialpodcast.org/how-to-listen>.



A podcast is an audio file that sits on a website. If you want to search for podcasts, download a free app to your smart phone (e.g. Podcasts within the Apple store, or Stitcher on Android). Hundreds of programmes are arranged by topic, popularity or region. You can download individual programmes or subscribe to a series. Think of it as radio that you can play on demand, wherever and however you wish to listen.

DO I HAVE TO PAY?

Not usually. Podcasts are available from all over the world for free. Many are produced by public broadcasting networks. Some presenters occasionally invite donations towards ongoing production, but contribution is entirely up to you.



PICK OF THE CROP

The choice is vast. In Apple’s Podcast app, Top Charts shows what’s popular among listeners in your region. Below are some shows we listen to regularly, but you’re sure to quickly develop your own favourites.

For exceptional storytelling

This American Life

Arguably the best for extraordinary real tales. It now has an archive of more than 550 hour-long shows.

For sleuths

Undisclosed

Created by supporters of Adnan Syed for an ongoing look at the case from *Serial* – and to raise funds for his appeal.

Criminal

Stories of people who’ve done wrong, been wronged, and/or become caught somewhere in the middle.

For inspiration

TED Radio Hour

If you enjoy TED talks, try these expanded audio compilations.

For movie lovers

Mark Kermode and Simon Mayo’s Film Reviews

Two BBC film reviewers engage in “on-air sparring” for a couple of hours – they call it Wittertainment – and interview top movie professionals.

For something surprising

Planet Money

More entertaining than the title suggests; it makes the world go round.

99% Invisible

A weekly look at something you probably never noticed or thought about before.

Freakonomics Radio

Steven Levitt and Stephen Dubner on “the hidden side of everything”.

All in a Day's Work

HUMOUR ON THE JOB

TAKE NOTE

While rushing around the hospital, busy doctors can sometimes leave odd comments on their patients' charts:

- "She stated that she had been constipated for most of her life, until she got divorced."
- "Patient has left his white blood cells at another hospital."
- "Patient has chest pains if she lies on her left side for over a year."
- "Has two teenage children but no other abnormalities."

Source: begent.org



FALSE ALARM

Working in a residential care home, my colleagues and I found ourselves dealing with what appeared to be an emergency situation.

"Doreen needs help - her toe is really badly cut," announced the carer who had found this poor lady in her room. "It seems as if all the skin is open and almost inside-out."

An ambulance crew arrived, but after only a few minutes I was surprised to see them leave again, laughing hysterically. "Our services will not be required here," one said.



"Your resident has dropped a slightly chewed-up prune on her foot. One quick wipe and she was cured."

SUBMITTED BY YVETTE DEBARR

NEED BACKUP

I was a medic in the army. One day, I woke up with terrible back pain. I went to the sick hall, where I was told I'd be taken to the hospital. After an hour, the captain came over. "Sorry for the delay," he said. "But we can't find the ambulance driver."

"Captain," I said. "I'm the ambulance driver."

SUBMITTED BY JOSEPH DUNN

PHOTO: THINKSTOCK

CRINGEWORTHY CLIENT REQUESTS

- The blue looks OK, but it would be great if it were a little more orange, like “blorange”.
- We would very much like it if you did the work for free but, if not, we can pay you \$20.
- Looks good, but the logo is too large. Please make it 100 per cent smaller.
- Could you make it a sort of dynamic beige?

Source: clientsfromhell.com

TIME FLIES

A young man recently came to the clinic I work at for an MRI and was put into the machine by an equally young, blonde technologist. When the examination was complete, he was removed from the MRI machine and greeted by a middle-aged, dark-haired tech.

“Whoa!” the patient exclaimed. “How long was I in there?”

SUBMITTED BY JOANNE KORMAN



PART-TIME HEALER

My daughter Amy was holding down two jobs: the first was as a manicurist at a salon; the other was raking leaves for a housing development. One day, she came back from lunch at the raking job to find a note. Her boss, who didn't know anything about her other job, had taken down this phone message: “Amy, you have a man to cure on Thursday at three.”

SUBMITTED BY NANCY BILLINGS



“I’m afraid I can’t treat you, Mr Fisk. I have a conflict of interest.”

CROSS WIRES

I was in a couple's home trying to fix their internet connection. The husband called out to his wife, who was in the other room, for the computer password. “Start with a capital S, then 123,” she shouted back.

We tried “S123” several times, but it didn't work. So we called the wife in. As she inputted the password, she muttered, “I really don't see what's so difficult about typing Start123.”

SUBMITTED BY A.R.



👉 Got a good joke, anecdote or real-life gem to share? Send it in and you could win cash! See page 6 for details.

The Woman With “Super Vision”

BY BETH DREHER

FOR CONCETTA ANTICO, the night sky bursts with sapphire and violet; a pink rose is tinged with gold and azure; a stone pathway is a rainbow of oranges, yellows, greens, blues, and pale reds.

Antico has “super vision,” or tetrachromacy, a rare genetic condition that allows her to see nearly 100 million colours. Compare that with the one million colours that people with normal vision can see.

While super-vision isn’t unusual in animals – species of birds choose mates based on subtle colour differences even into the ultraviolet range, and insects see the colour wavelengths on a much greater spectrum than the human eye can see – it’s estimated that the condition affects only 1% of people.

“I see more nuanced shades and more colours in low light,” Antico told the BBC. “If you and I look at a leaf, I may see magenta running around the outside of the leaf or turquoise in certain parts where you would just see dark green,” Antico says. “Where the light is making shadows on the walls, I’m seeing violets and lavenders and turquoise. You’re just seeing gray.”

“She truly does see the world differently than we do,” says neurologist Wendy Martin, who first suggested Antico research her particular perspective.

As a child in Australia, Antico knew she had a unique point of view. At seven, she painted vivid reproductions of works by Cézanne, Van Gogh, and Monet in oils. Now she makes her living as a painter and



Concetta Antico's eyes contain an extra cone cell allowing her to see "four-dimensional" colour

PHOTO: COURTESY CONCETTA ANTICO

art instructor in San Diego, where she moved with her husband, Jason Pizzinat, in the mid-1980s. The colours she sees in Southern California's flora and fauna and her memories of Australia make up her vast palette.

Antico readily volunteers for scientific studies, hoping that research on her will also lead to a better understanding of colour blindness, which affects the vision of her 12-year-old daughter. Colour blindness can be caused by the same genetic mutation as tetrachromacy. (Neither of her sons has the mutation.)

Despite Antico's enhanced visual

experience, there's a downside: sensory overload.

"When I wake up, I stare out the window for a little while because I can't help but see all the colours outside. I see all the colours in the wood floor as I'm walking to the bathroom. I notice all the colours in the toothpaste. Downstairs, the fruit in the bowl [is bursting with colour]."

The grocery store is "a nightmare": down every aisle, "it's [an assault] of colour."

Perhaps as a result, Antico's favourite colour is white. "It is so peaceful and restful for my eyes." **R**

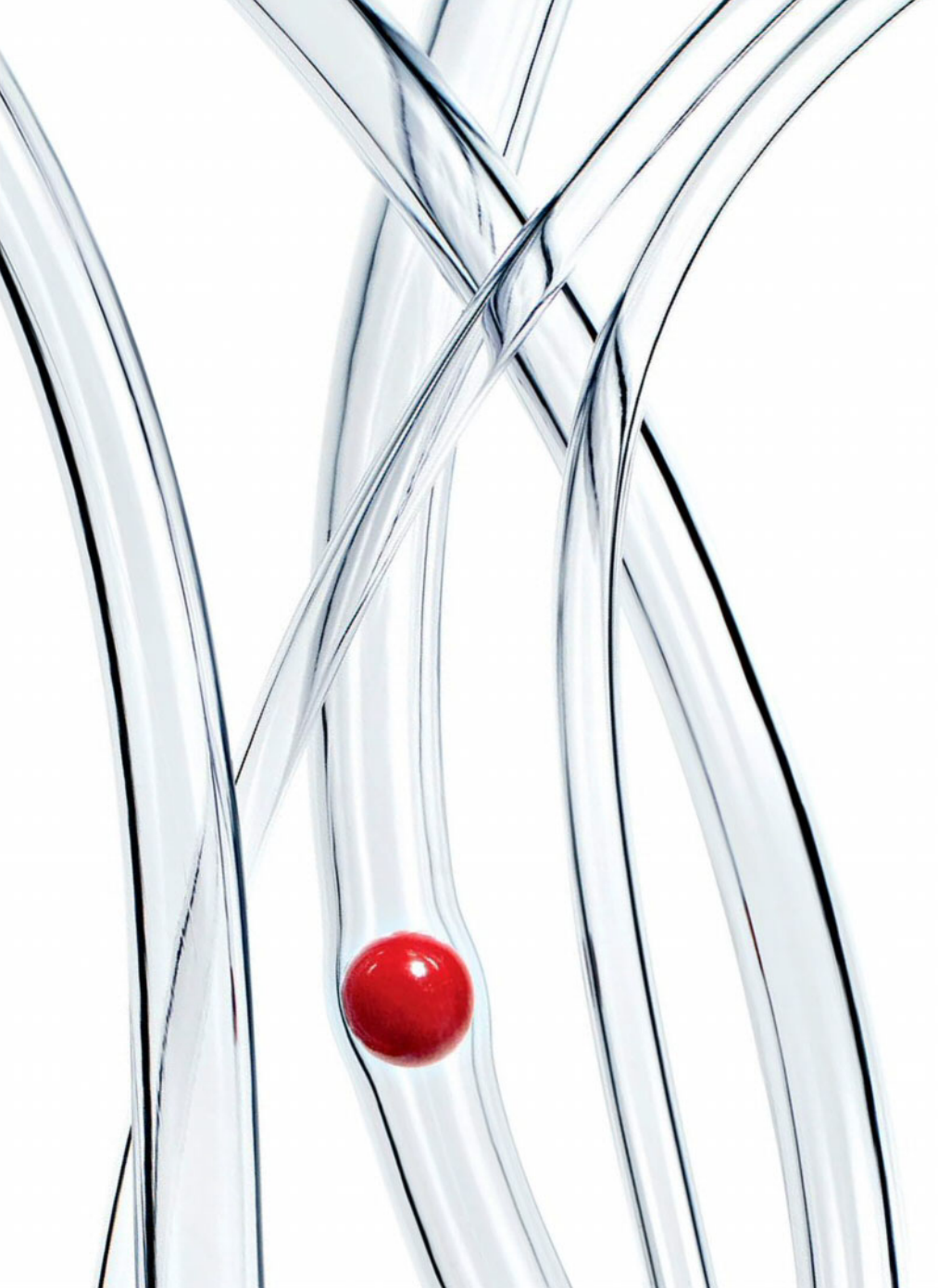
A Ticking Time Bomb In Your Leg

BY SUSAN INCE

WHEN SHE WAS 42, Tina Theobald suddenly developed a painful muscle spasm in her leg that wouldn't ease. She had recently started jogging and thought nothing of the sore calf muscle. She iced it and hobbled through a short holiday trip as her leg swelled. Theobald happened to be scheduled to see her doctor for

a sprained thumb upon her return, and she was diagnosed with – and immediately hospitalised for – a large blood clot in her leg. Two days later, Theobald struggled to breathe and was hit with chest pain so excruciating she needed morphine. A portion of the clot had broken off and was blocking the blood supply to part of

PHOTOGRAPHED BY CLAIRE BENOIST



her lung, a life-threatening condition called pulmonary embolism.

Theobald always thought blood clots affected older people – and it’s true that their risk is far higher – but she quickly discovered that young and middle-aged people are vulnerable too. A number of risk factors play a role, including certain medications, pregnancy, immobility that allows blood to pool (prolonged sitting, say, during a long flight), surgery or trauma (such as a car accident) that can injure veins, and conditions that increase blood clotting (such as cancer and autoimmune disorders).

Every year, millions of people develop deep vein thrombosis (DVT) – clots most common in leg veins, where they can cause pain, swelling, and redness. More than one in four adults struck by a first DVT or pulmonary embolism are under 50, according to a population study of Minnesota adults. One third of DVTs are followed by pulmonary embolism, which kills as many as 100,000 people each year in the US, often suddenly, according to the CDC. A 2013 report from Australia indicates that deaths from pulmonary embolism are on the rise in women 25 to 44.

“Symptoms can be vague, such as pain or feeling like you just can’t get enough air. As a doctor, if you’re not

suspicious, you can miss a lot of cases,” says Dr Bengt Zöller, an associate professor of internal medicine at Lund University in Sweden. A 2010 Danish study found that most younger adults with fatal pulmonary embolisms had told doctors about symptoms days or weeks before their deaths, only to

have their complaints misinterpreted.

“Because DVTs and pulmonary embolisms can be difficult to recognise, we need to emphasise prevention,” says Dr Nigel Key, a professor of medicine at the University of North Carolina in the US.

The good news is that individuals have

enormous power to lower their risks. The following measures have all been shown to help avoid clotting.

Review Your Medication

A few months prior to her DVT, Theobald had been prescribed birth control pills to regulate her period. All oestrogen-containing medication (as well as the vaginal device NuvaRing and newer birth control pills containing drospirenone) may increase clot risk (as does pregnancy, with risk returning to normal about 12 weeks after delivery). Newer-generation birth control pills are one suspected reason for the rising pulmonary embolism deaths in young Australian women.



*Symptoms
can be vague,
such as pain or
feeling like you
just can’t get
enough air*

If your doctor is worried about your clotting risk, she may recommend non-hormonal contraception such as a barrier method or a copper IUD.

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists urges doctors to consider prescribing a patch rather than a pill for postmenopausal women on hormone replacement therapy. Taking pills raises DVT risk up to fivefold compared with not taking hormones, but delivering hormones through the skin doesn't seem to affect clotting risk.

In June 2014, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced that prescription testosterone products must carry a warning that they raise DVT risk. Prednisone and other steroids, especially at high doses, also increase DVT risk in both men and women.

Know Your Family History

As the number of your close relatives who've had a clot rises, so does your own DVT risk, found Swedish research. Having two or more siblings with DVT raises your risk 50-fold compared with someone who has no affected siblings. "If you have a strong family history, your doctor may think twice about prescribing hormones or may give a longer course of anticlotting drugs after surgery," says Zöller.

Lose Weight

Obesity can more than double DVT risk, especially in women over 1.6m

and men 1.8m or taller. "Tall people have to pump blood farther against the force of gravity, which may reduce flow in the legs and raise the risk of clotting," explains Sigrid Brækkan, a researcher at the University of Tromsø in Norway. Theobald, who is 1.7m, weighed near her heaviest, at 86kg, when her clot occurred.

Get Moving

Walking, or raising and lowering your heels while sitting, engages your calf muscles, squeezing veins and propelling blood upward, which helps prevent DVT. Immobility is why long flights are a risk. The American College of Chest Physicians recommends you get up once every hour or so and raise and lower your heels or rotate your ankles when seated. If you're at high risk, ask your doctor about wearing compression stockings or taking preventive blood-thinning medication for flights or car trips of more than four hours.

Eat Fish

In a large Swedish study from 2014, people who took fish oil capsules and ate fish three or more times a week had a 48% lower chance of developing DVT than those who ate fish less often and didn't supplement with fish oil.

Be Vigilant at the Hospital

Sixty per cent of DVTs occur in people who have recently been hospitalised, whether for surgery (general

anaesthesia temporarily widens veins, which can allow blood to pool and clot), trauma (anything that damages veins can slow blood flow, increasing risk), or illness (which can lead to prolonged bed rest).

Make sure doctors know about your medications and any DVT risks, such as a family history. You should be encouraged to move around, and you may need compression stockings or anticoagulating drugs. Last June, Boston Medical Center reported that it had reduced post-surgery DVTs by 84% (from an admittedly poor record) by tailoring preventive treatment to patients' risks and by getting patients walking soon after operations. Also, follow medical advice before and after your discharge. Missed doses of preventive drugs are to blame for many clots.

Theobald, for one, is diligent about taking anticoagulating medication because she knows that DVTs can return with a vengeance. Five months after her initial 13-day hospital stay, doctors weaned her off the blood thinner warfarin, but a new clot formed months later, enlarging her leg to almost the size of her waist. The resulting ten-day hospital stint brought new tortures, including shots of clot-busting drugs into the affected thigh that her doctor likened to Roto-Rooter her veins.

Now she is committed to taking warfarin – or whatever easier treatment comes along – for the rest of her life. She wears compression stockings when sitting at her desk at a software company. In her free time, she keeps moving: she's proud to have just completed her fifth triathlon. **R**



ACT FAST ON THESE SYMPTOMS

A blood clot is a medical emergency because of the possibility of a pulmonary embolism. If you experience any of the symptoms below, seek medical aid right away, especially if you might be at increased risk because of recent immobility, pregnancy, surgery or cancer.

SIGNS OF DVT IN A LEG:

- Pain (like a pulled muscle or a muscle spasm)
- Swelling
- Discolouration (red or blue)
- Warm to touch

SIGNS OF PULMONARY EMBOLISM:

- Shortness of breath
- Chest pain
- Unexplained cough (may cough up blood)
- Rapid heartbeat

Source: clotconnect.org

Quotable Quotes



“
Social change is better achieved by being for something than against something.

HELENE GAYLE, CEO

THE SMILE IS THE SHORTEST DISTANCE BETWEEN TWO PEOPLE.

VICTOR BORGE, pianist

If you don't stick to your values when they're being tested, they're not values: they're hobbies.

JON STEWART



For small creatures such as we, the vastness is bearable only through love. CARL SAGAN

WORK LIKE THERE IS SOMEONE WORKING 24 HOURS A DAY TO TAKE IT AWAY FROM YOU.

MARK CUBAN, entrepreneur

IN THREE WORDS I CAN SUM UP EVERYTHING I'VE LEARNED ABOUT LIFE: IT GOES ON.

ROBERT FROST



A bird doesn't sing because it has an answer, it sings because it has a song.

JOAN WALSH ANGLUND, children's author

It is a daily struggle sometimes and hard work but happiness begins with your own attitude and how you look at the world.

GRETCHEN RUBIN, author



Millions of people visit each year, but there's a side to the Scottish capital that most miss. Crime writer **Ian Rankin** takes us on a tour of his hidden city

Ian Rankin's *Edinburgh*

HOW IS IT POSSIBLE FOR A CITY TO BE BOTH

blazingly public and intensely private at the self-same time? Somehow Edinburgh manages the feat, even in August, with festivals all go and the population almost double the norm.

This quirk is something I've explored many times in my novels, because to me it says lots about the very nature of Edinburgh and how it came to be the way it is. The Scottish capital is bursting with stories, but sometimes you have to tease them out. Its history seems apparent from the moment you arrive, yet there are things you'll never see unless you know where to look – or get lucky. I've lived here more than half my life, yet can't claim anything close to an

Ian Rankin, pictured at the Oxford Bar, has published 19 bestselling novels featuring the Edinburgh detective John Rebus. His books have been published in 36 languages

PHOTO: MURDO MACLEOD



encyclopaedic knowledge of the place. Even when the city swells with hundreds of thousands of visitors, it's possible to escape and discover a quieter, quirkier city just minutes from the jugglers, fire-eaters and myriad other performers who flock to the world's largest arts festival.

Maybe it is all an accident of history and geology. In times past, while invading armies prepared to strike, the denizens would secrete themselves in tunnels dug beneath Castle Rock and the Old Town.

You can still get a sense of this underground existence by visiting the Blair Street Vaults or Mary King's Close (where narrow streets with houses on either side housed citizens during the 16th and 17th centuries).

When the invaders arrived, they'd find the city empty. It was easy for them to ransack and loot, but they would soon get tired of this and march back out the way they'd come, at which point the citizens would rise up from their underground hiding places.

Edinburgh has always seemed to me a furtive place. Throughout history it has made its money from invisible industries such as banking and insurance. And while the city has been known to celebrate its success stories (the Scott Monument, a memorial to the great novelist Walter Scott) and flag up folly (the unfinished "Parthenon" on Calton Hill), it is not a place where people flaunt their talents. You don't see many Ferraris – the wealth

sits quietly behind the New Town's thick Georgian walls.

I ALWAYS ENVY THE FIRST-TIMER who arrives by train. As you ascend from the platform to Waverley Bridge, Castle Rock catches your eye and, stabbing the sky below it, the Gothic spire of the **Scott Monument**. Waverley Station is named after Sir Walter Scott's first novel, a sensation when published in 1814.

It was Scott, incidentally, who popularised tartan as part of the Scottish national identity in the 1820s and who, when later he faced humiliating bankruptcy, did the honourable thing and wrote book after book until his debts were cleared.

Edinburgh was once called a city of "public probity and private vice" and this still rings true, though the "probity" tag has lost some lustre since the near-collapse of the Royal Bank of Scotland, one of the city's biggest employers, which recorded the UK's largest-ever corporate loss during the financial crisis before being rescued by the government.

But visitors to Edinburgh, if they stick to the main tourist routes, will be seeing only the city's most public side. Travel just a little further afield and you can widen your appreciation. That's why, on a blustery day, I set out from the **Oxford Bar** for a walk.

This isn't a random starting point. I discovered it as a young writer. I'd invented a character called Detective

*The Scott
Monument,
an Edinburgh
landmark*



Inspector John Rebus, and he needed a place to hang out. The Oxford Bar is central (Young Street is a two-minute walk from Princes Street), yet hidden. It is small, but contains the widest possible cross-section of Edinburgh life.

As I walk in, there are a few nods of greeting (nothing too effusive). Kirsty behind the bar has guessed that I'll want a pint of Deuchars India Pale Ale. Edinburgh at one time had more than 40 breweries – the Scottish Parliament sits on the remains of one of them. These days, though, there is just the one. It's called the Caledonian Brewery, and that's where my IPA was made – about 3km from here as the crow flies.

The "Ox" is run by Harry Cullen.

Harry used to sing in a folk group (though he won't thank me for publicising the fact), and has a fund of stories of his own. In fact, everyone I have ever met in the Oxford Bar has a story to tell. I ask Harry today if any Rebus fans have been in. He rolls his eyes.

"Two of them took photos – without buying a drink!" He then asks me if I'm having another. I shake my head.

"Things to do," I say by way of apology.

"That's my profits shot," he mutters, polishing a glass.

WITH A SHRUG AND A WAVE, I head out, crossing nearby Charlotte Square (home to the First Minister, head of

the Scottish government) and emerging on a rain-soaked Queensferry Street. The shops soon disappear as I approach Randolph Cliff. I cross the road and head down Bells Brae, turning right at a signpost announcing that Leith is two-and-three-quarter miles away. This path, deserted apart from the odd dog-walker and jogger, runs along a river, the Water of Leith, and can take you all the way to the port district of Leith.

The great novelist and traveller Robert Louis Stevenson, author of *Treasure Island*, *Kidnapped* and *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, once called his native Edinburgh a “precipitous city”, and he was absolutely right.

Whether you’re peering down on to Princes Street Gardens from the castle, or craning your neck to look up from the Cowgate at George IV Bridge above, you sense that Edinburgh contains an intensity of heights and depths.

WALKING ALONG MILLER ROW, I’m soon staring up at **Dean Bridge**, designed by Thomas Telford and completed in 1832. I’ve decided against walking all the way to Leith, so emerge at the footbridge between Mackenzie Place and Upper Dean Terrace. One option here is to amble up Edinburgh’s loveliest street, Ann Street, with its neat gardens and immaculate Georgian facades. But instead I carry on to Raeburn Place,

emerging from one village, Dean Village, into another, Stockbridge.

From here, it is a short uphill stroll into the New Town proper. When the Old Town, stretching from the castle down to the Palace of Holyroodhouse, became overcrowded and insanitary, the New Town was proposed, with work commencing in the 1770s.

At this point, I have to admit that I get lost in the New Town. My destination is **Kay’s Bar** on Jamaica Street. Somehow I manage to skirt it, passing the art galleries of Dundas Street and a favourite fish and chip shop, L’Alba D’Oro.

I walk down Heriot Row (once home to the young Robert Louis Stevenson), then double back on myself, and stumble upon Kay’s almost by accident, the sort of happy accident that makes an Edinburgh walk such a pleasure.

There are some cities in the world where you’ll find conversation at every turn, but not here. Edinburgh is quiet and reserved – a place for thinking. Maybe the locals only loosen up when they enter their favoured watering-hole. After walking in silence, it’s nice to lubricate (and then exercise) the vocal cords. There is chat in Kay’s.

Rested, I start to climb back uphill, walking along Queen Street, past the **Scotch Malt Whisky Society**, which boasts hundreds of malts and no two alike. A right turn takes me to George Street, the grande dame of the Princes Street area.



Get an overview of Rankin's tour from Salisbury Crags in Holyrood Park

Time was, it was filled with banks, but most of these have become bars and restaurants. **The Dome**, for example, was the Commercial Bank of Scotland headquarters. This neoclassical splendour is now a place to do lunch, beneath a spectacular glass dome in what used to be the main banking hall.

At the far end of George Street, I turn left and then take a right. I'm now where the New Town meets Leith Walk, and I pause outside another bar, the Conan Doyle on York Place, staring across the road at a modern addition to the city's monuments – a statue commemorating Sherlock Holmes, whose creator grew up in Edinburgh, basing his character on one of his university professors.

THE WEATHER HAS BRIGHTENED by now, and I see no reason to head home just yet. I have some shopping to do. A friend in London collects LP records, and he visits Edinburgh a couple of times a year, due to the quality of the record shops. There's one on the Canongate, and a couple on Leith Walk.

Another stretch of good shops runs the length of South Bridge, Nicolson Street and Clerk Street, and includes (just off the main thoroughfare on East Crosscauseway) **Backbeat**.

Dougie McShane opened Backbeat in 1981, selling mostly blues albums. He now sells pretty well everything, and he reckons he has 65,000 items in stock. An English lad emerges with his finds. He's a blues fan. My own son is



One of the many narrow “closes” to be found in the centre of Edinburgh

22, and likes vinyl and the blues both. I ask Dougie about this. “It’s great,” he says. “Teenagers buying record decks and then coming back to proper records because they just sound better – less harsh, more authentic.”

To get to Backbeat, I’ve walked past my favourite museum, **Surgeons’ Hall** on Nicolson Street, where visitors can view the death mask of the serial killer William Burke (of Burke and Hare fame). Along with his accomplice William Hare, Burke murdered 16 people in the 1820s then sold the bodies to a doctor eager for dissection material for his anatomy lectures. Also on view here is a wallet made out of Burke’s skin. So much more interesting than dinosaur bones, I’ve always thought.

Having escaped Backbeat with just the one purchase (of boogie-woogie piano tunes), I notice a couple of early novels by the American crime writer Patricia Highsmith in a charity-shop window, so I have to have those, too.

I HAVE A PLAN IN MIND NOW, and I hail a taxi, telling the driver to take me to Blackford Glen Road. The driver drops me at a dead end. But not quite a dead end – a path leads into the wooded parkland called the **Hermitage**.

Here, again, is the hidden Edinburgh. Only locals ever seem to find this place. Their kids wear wellies and play by the stream or disappear into the trees. Strangers smile and nod at you. If you’re here, you’re not really a stranger at all – you are part of a community. By the time I emerge on Braid Road, my batteries have been recharged. What’s more, it’s a short stroll down into **Morningside**, my final stop before home.

The Canny Man’s is another famed Edinburgh pub, filled with bric-a-brac and hideaways where you can sup a quiet pint or savour a malt. If you want to be left in peace to read the paper (or start a Patricia Highsmith novel), that’s fine; if you’d prefer conversation, that’s fine too.

THROUGHOUT MUCH OF 2014, the bars of Edinburgh resounded to the passionate arguments of both Yes and

FESTIVAL CITY



Edinburgh calls itself the “world’s leading festival city” with good reason – It has four major festivals in August alone:

Edinburgh International Festival (www.eif.co.uk)

Edinburgh Festival Fringe (www.edfringe.com);

both 7-31 August, 2015.

Edinburgh Book Festival (www.edbookfest.co.uk),
15-31 August, 2015

Edinburgh Art Festival (www.edinburghartfestival.com), 30 July to 30 August, 2015

No camps as Scotland wrestled with the idea of full independence from the UK. Posters and flags went up in tenement windows, rallies gathered outside the Scottish Parliament at Holyrood and elsewhere, concerts and

public debates were held, and feelings ran high.

The vote may have been in favour of No, but the issue has not gone away, as this year’s UK general election has shown. But those canniest of denizens in the Canny Man’s seem to keep quiet counsel as they sip their drinks today.

Morningside is yet another Edinburgh “village”, and I live on the edge of it. As a student, I rented a shared New Town flat. Later, I made my home near Backbeat Records (coincidence, I assure you). I have also lived in Tollcross and Oxcgangs and Peffermill. Each one boasted its own unique atmosphere; each holds memories.

Today’s walk has taken me just under four hours. I’ve come to know my city a little better, but am left with a yearning to know still more. **R**

The Beat Goes On: The Complete Rebus Short Stories is published by Orion

Puzzles

See page 120

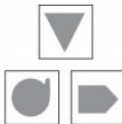
Flower Power



rotates 90° clockwise and moves to bottom left, and the square in the middle rotates 180° and moves to the top of the pyramid.

Shape Shifting

C. The square originally on the left rotates 90° clockwise and moves to bottom right, the square originally on the right

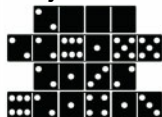


Pyramid Tower

One possible solution is:



Dotty Dominoes



It's All in the Shade

37.5% (%)

Hidden Meaning

- A. Bend over backwards
- B. Pay through the nose
- C. Face up to reality

Smart Animals



Left to their own devices, these smart animals show off their extraordinary skills and powers of deduction

Flying High

DOROTHY SPEARS

Back in September 2014, I looked out to see a baby magpie flapping frantically as it glided into our backyard. Here, danger lurked in the form of Tess, our eight-year-old Maltese terrier. I rescued the little magpie and put him over the fence into the park behind our house. Unable to get airborne, despite his

parents squawking encouragement, this resolute little fellow promptly hopped onto the bottom rail of a neighbour's fence where some palings were missing. He spent the day there between repeated attempts to fly.

Returning from a short trip a week later, we were delighted to find the bird hopping around the park. This intrepid little fellow had developed his own method of getting airborne.

ILLUSTRATION: BECK WHEELER

Egged on by his parents, we watched as he would negotiate the five steps of the slide. Then, with madly flapping wings, he would launch himself, swoop across the park and land on our fence. From there he managed to reach our neighbour's shed roof before finally getting enough lift to make it into our eucalyptus tree. He is a survivor.

The magpie and his family soon settled into the park. I have spotted them sheltering under the slide during a severe storm, sitting on our clothes line laughing at our frustrated dog, and sneaking under our back gate to snatch tasty insect morsels from the lawn (while Tess's back is turned, of course). What clever birds!

Paws for Effect

LIA MAHERAS

Last year, our family cat Samara was mewing at the lounge room door, trying to convince me to get up and open it for her. I was in the middle of something important, so I ignored her for a bit. A few minutes later she hopped up on the table beside the door and started mewing again but I still had my hands full with something else.

When I eventually turned back to look at her again, Samara was sitting on the table next to the door, stretching out her fluffy front legs to reach it and moving her paws against the doorknob like she was trying to open it! She was twisting them

around the knob as though she knew how to turn it to make it open and let her out. I was stunned. She stopped and stared at me and I just stared back at her.

Free at Last

MARY LACY

One morning, Skip, my ginger-and-white cat, and I were searching for our three-year-old tortoiseshell cat Monique. She had been missing since the previous afternoon. I had called out to her and searched all her likely hiding places, but hadn't had any success.

Although Monique spent much of her time exploring, she always returned home for meals so I was worried. It wasn't until we were returning to the house from our latest search, that I noticed the car was rocking slightly. After wondering what could be causing this, it dawned on me. Maybe she was in the car!

I opened the back and there she was. Unable to gain our attention by mewing at the window as we walked past, Monique must have begun nudging the side of the car to make us notice. Upon release, she leapt out of the car and trotted after us to the house. After enjoying fuss and pats for the next half hour, she vanished out of the door for her next adventure. Who said cats aren't smart?

You could earn cash by telling us about the antics of unique pets or wildlife. Turn to page 6 for details on how to contribute.

MOVIE DIGEST



The Jolly Roger sets sail while Pan (Levi Miller) hides from Blackbeard (Hugh Jackman)

PAN *Fantasy*

Those who know the tale of Peter Pan may well have wondered how he and the lost boys ended up in Neverland. Wonder no more – this fresh-faced adaptation of the timeless tale tells the story of the orphaned Peter who is spirited away to an enchanted land. There, Peter discovers fun, danger and his destiny in a world of pirates,



mermaids and native Indians. With Hugh Jackman as Blackbeard, *Pan* is a high fantasy adventure that puts a twist on one of the world's favourite stories.

ANT-MAN *Action*

The next Marvel movie to roll off the production line is *Ant-Man*. When petty criminal Scott Lang (Pau Rudd) stumbles across a new material that will shrink his size while increasing his strength, he becomes the most unlikely of heroes. With the help of his mentor, Dr Hank Pym (Michael Douglas) and his Ant-Man suit, Lang struggles to overcome his conman past to pull off a heist that could save the world.



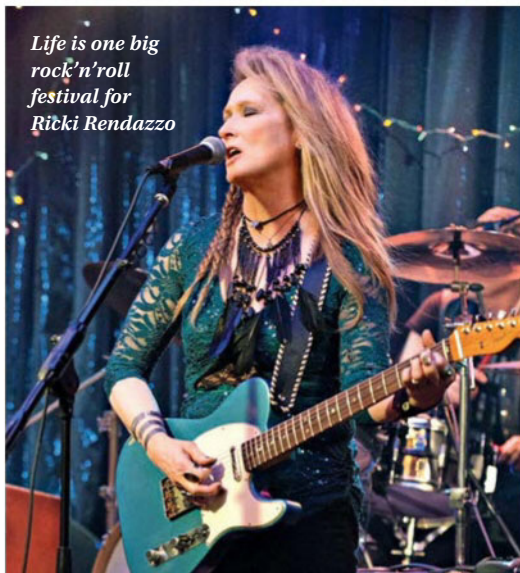
Ant-Man: small but strong

MR HOLMES *Mystery*

It's 1947, the retired Sherlock Holmes is 93 years of age, and he's fed up with the way he has been misrepresented in Watson's bestsellers. Using pieces of his deteriorated memory and a photograph of a beautiful woman as his only clues, Holmes (Ian McKellen) attempts to redeem his reputation by solving his own 50-year-old cold case. Based loosely on Mitch Cullin's 2005 novel *A Slight Trick of the Mind*, *Mr Holmes* follows literature's most famous detective in what could be his final mystery.



Holmes: never too old to solve another mystery



Life is one big rock'n'roll festival for Ricki Rendazzo

RICKI AND THE FLASH *Drama/Comedy*

Here's another fantastic example of Meryl Streep's versatility. Streep stars as Ricki Rendazzo, a hard-rock lead singer and guitarist of The Flash. Ricki can also lay claim to being a dysfunctional and largely absent mother of three adult kids. In a role that at first glance could be considered a bit underwhelming for an actress of her calibre, Streep pulls this off with understated class. Ricki cuts her band's tour short to return home to help with a family crisis. What unfolds is a series of hilarious (and touching) moments of a past catching up with a woman who let part of her life simply rock-'n'-roll on by.

Q: *What 2013 film starring Tom Hanks and Emma Thompson tells the story behind the making of Mary Poppins?*



FOCUS Drama

In the midst of his latest scheme, veteran conman Nicky (Will Smith) agrees to teach Jess (Margot Robbie) the tricks of the trade. But as the two become romantically involved, Nicky breaks it off



*Bad company:
Nicky and Jess
talk business*

before they stumble into dangerous territory. Three years later, Nicky is facing his riskiest ruse when Jess – now an experienced femme

fatale – returns and threatens to throw a spanner in the works. Full of twists, it's the audience who fall victim to the biggest cons of all.

Spotlight On ... Steve Martin

Hollywood funny man Steve Martin turns 70 on August 14. We uncovered some of his lesser-known – though impressive – achievements.

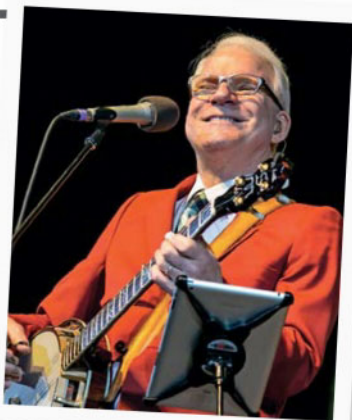
■ Since appearing in his first movie, *The Absent-Minded Waiter* (1977), Steve Martin has gone on to appear in over 50 movies, including *The Jerk* (1979), *Planes, Train and Automobiles* (1987), *Father of the Bride* (1991), and *The Pink Panther* (2006).

■ He is an accomplished banjo player and this year was inducted into the American Banjo Museum Hall of Fame.

■ He has won four Grammy Awards for his comedy acts and music.

■ In 2014, his song "Love Has Come for You" won Best American Roots Song.

■ He may have played the father of 12 kids in *Cheaper By*



the Dozen (2003) but only became a first-time dad at the age of 67 in December 2012.

■ Famous for his thick white hair, he began going grey in his twenties.

■ While at California State University in the '60s, he studied philosophy and considered becoming a professor.

■ Before becoming famous, he had jobs at Disneyland and Knott's Berry Farm.

A:
*Saving
Mr Banks*

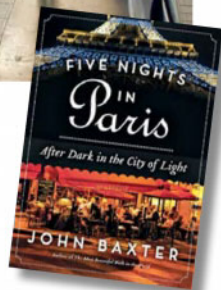
BOOK DIGEST



*A scent called
Madeleine wafts
around all 300
stations of the
Métro de Paris*

John Baxter in **FIVE NIGHTS IN PARIS** (HarperCollins) takes readers on a sensory journey of the Paris Metro: "...RATP, the agency managing the metro system, spends a fortune on perfume every year. How else to neutralise the odors of burning rubber, hot oil, and ionised air? Not to mention the smell of commuters in their hundreds of thousands, and the effluvia of the homeless who haunt the more remote stations, pissing into any convenient drain?"

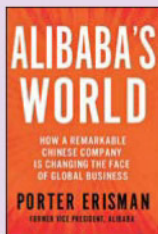
"They first tried in the 1990s with Francine, a mixture of natural plant extracts: eucalyptus, lavender, mint. It flopped in trials. For their second attempt, code name Madeleine, they abandoned the 'green' agenda in favour of those synthetic aromas used by most modern *parfumeurs*: vanilla, jasmine, lily citrus, rose. It did the trick. Since 1998, Madeleine has been poured onto metro stations at the rate of 1.5 metric tonnes a month."



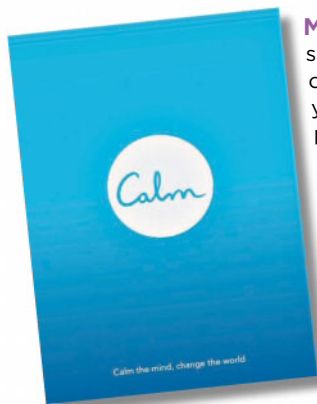
Jack Ma, founder and chairman of Alibaba, is the richest man in China

Advice from **Porter Erisman**, a former vice president of Alibaba, the Chinese e-commerce giant, writing in **ALIBABA'S WORLD** (Pan Macmillan):

"... Entrepreneurs often come up with an idea but are scared of when they learn that 'somebody is already doing that.' But being first doesn't always matter as much as people think. Being first to market is not as important as being the best in the market. eBay was first to the market in China, and its managers assumed their first-mover advantage would lead them to victory. But Taobao [an Alibaba Group company] simply built a better product and prevailed in the long run."



Michael Acton Smith in **CALM** (Penguin Books) suggests this simple tip: "... Change your password, change your life. How many times a day do you re-enter your computer password? Having to change our passwords constantly is one of the exasperating necessities of office life. But what if you were to reappropriate your password, using it instead as a modern-day mantra to help ensure you remain mindful of whatever it is you most want to achieve? This could be 'BU!LDNEWFRI3NDSHIPS', 'SAVE4SKIING', 'BEK:ND@HOME'. The joy of it is that you can alter it every month if you like. It's an opportunity to repeatedly hit your subconscious with a mindful reminder. Don't pass it up!"

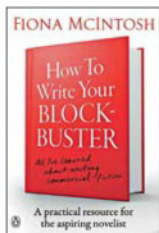


In **HOW TO WRITE YOUR BLOCKBUSTER**

(Penguin Books),
Fiona McIntosh

says: "... I admire everyone who wants to write a book. Sadly I know the majority of aspiring novelists will just talk about it. And yes, some of them will make a start and keep tinkering, often for years. Regardless, the key difference between these people and all of us who have been published is that at some point the writers in my camp stopped talking about it, stopped dreaming about it and got on with writing. We finished a manuscript with all of its trial and pain. And, even more impressively, we found the courage to send it off to a publisher or show it to an agent.

"To write is a verb. At school I was taught that a verb is 'an action word'. So no more procrastination. Today's the day you get active and begin the journey of writing your novel."



Every beetle is a gazelle in the eye of its mother.

Moorish proverb

A mother is not to be compared with another person. She is incomparable.

African proverb

There is only one pretty child in the world, and every mother has it.

Chinese proverb

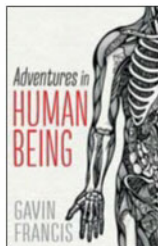
The greatest love is a mother's, then a dog's, then a sweetheart's.

Polish proverb

Quoted in **MUMS ARE LIKE BUTTONS: THEY HOLD EVERYTHING TOGETHER**
(Pan Macmillan)

"... We can taste what's in our mouths, touch what's within our reach, smell within hundreds of metres and hear within tens of miles. But it's only through our vision that we are in communication with the sun and the stars."

Gavin Francis
explores some
ADVENTURES IN HUMAN BEING
(Profile Books)



Puzzles

Challenge yourself by solving these puzzles and mind stretchers, then check your answers on page 111



Flower Power

Which are the only two pieces that will fit together perfectly to form a flower identical to the one on the left? Pieces may be rotated, but not flipped over.

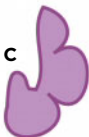
A



B



C



D



E



Shape Shifting



is to



as



is to...

A



B



C



D

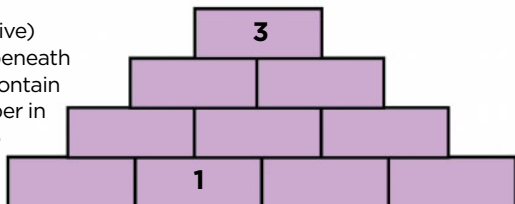


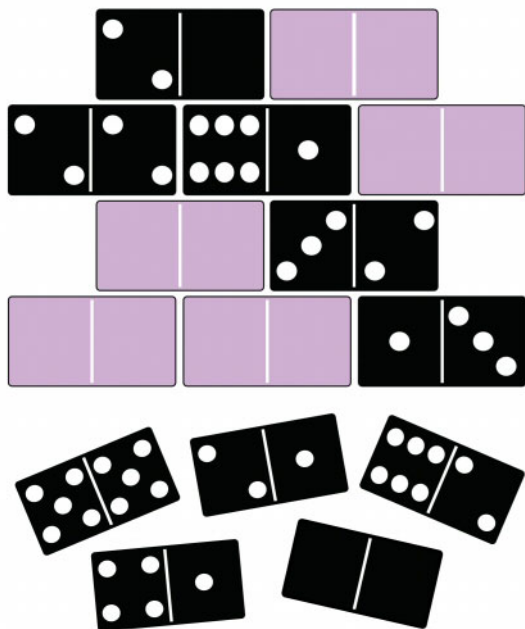
E



Pyramid Tower

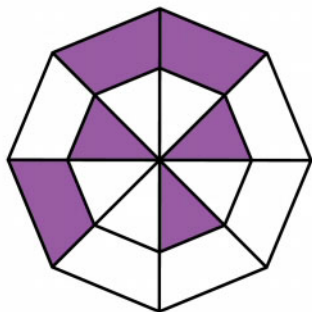
Each block is equal to the (positive) difference of the two numbers beneath it. The completed pyramid will contain the digits from 1 to 10, one number in each block. We have placed two of the numbers for you.





Dotty Dominoes

There are ten dominoes in this wall, but five have been left blank. Can you place the missing dominoes correctly, so that each vertical line of four numbers (as well as the two end vertical lines of two numbers) adds up to eight?



It's All in the Shade

What percentage of the shape to the left is coloured purple?

Hidden Meaning

Identify the common words or phrases below.

**BEND
DRAW
DRAW**

A

**P
NOANO
Y**

B

**REALITY
C
A
F**

C

Trivia

1. Which two signs of the zodiac begin with A? **2 points**

2. What African mammal's name is derived from the Greek words for river horse? **1 point**

3. In what decades did the world population cross 2 billion, 4 billion and 6 billion? **3 points**

4. Which popular Disney character owned Pluto the dog? **1 point**

5. What is the Spanish term for an afternoon nap? **1 point**

6. What term beginning with B is the astronomy term for two stars that orbit each other? **1 point**

7. In which Asian city – a former Summer Olympic Games host – is this month's World Athletics Championship being held? What are the other two previous Asian hosts of the Summer Olympics? **3 points**

8. Which Egyptian God beginning with A is depicted with the head of a jackal? **1 point**

9. Name the films from which these famous last lines came:

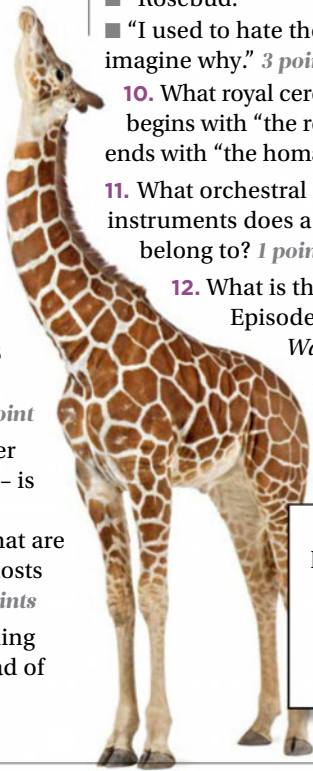
- "There's no place like home."
- "Rosebud."
- "I used to hate the water." "I can't imagine why." **3 points**

10. What royal ceremony of six parts begins with "the recognition" and ends with "the homage"? **1 point**

11. What orchestral family of instruments does a glockenspiel belong to? **1 point**

12. What is the full title of Episode VII in the *Star Wars* movie franchise, due for release in December? **1 point**

13. A human has seven neck bones. How many does a giraffe have? **1 point**



16-20 Gold medal

11-15 Silver medal

6-10 Bronze medal

0-5 Wooden spoon

ANSWERS: 1. Aquarius and Aries. 2. Hippopotamus. 3. 2bn: 1920s (1927); 4bn: 1970s (1974); 6bn: 1990s (1999). 4. Mickey Mouse. 5. Siesta. 6. Binary stars. 7. Beijing; Tokyo and Seoul. 8. Anubis (Anpu). 9. Wizard of Oz; Citizen Kane; Jaws. 10. Coronation. 11. Percussion (it is similar to a xylophone). 12. The Force Awakens. 13. Seven.

IT PAYS TO INCREASE YOUR

Word Power

Which Describes You?

Whatever your personality type, you'll win friends and influence people with a good vocabulary. See which of these words related to character you can define – and perhaps which defines you – and then analyse the next page for answers.



1. craven *adj.* –

A: reckless. B: fussy.
C: cowardly.

2. picaresque *adj.* –

A: like a daring rascal.
B: good-looking on camera. C: standoffish.

3. recluse *n.* –

A: group leader.
B: hermit.
C: problem solver.

4. sanguine *adj.* –

A: optimistic.
B: melancholy. C: shy.

5. choleric *adj.* –

A: logical.
B: health-conscious.
C: hot-tempered.

6 congenial *adj.* –

A: unreliable. B: given to gossip. C: friendly.

7. narcissist *n.* –

A: generous giver.
B: self-absorbed sort.
C: analytical type.

8. boeotian *adj.* –

A: compulsive eater.
B: snakelike.
C: ignorant and dull.

9. acolyte *n.* –

A: follower.
B: braggart.
C: daredevil.

10. bon vivant *n.* –

A: good listener.
B: trusted ally.
C: lover of fine dining.

11. leggiadrous *adj.* –

A: easily angered.
B: elegant and graceful.
C: a petty criminal.

12. venal *adj.* –

A: virtuous.
B: corruptible.
C: interfering.

13. bumptious *adj.* –

A: pushy.
B: countrified.
C: pudgy.

14. altruistic *adj.* –

A: honest.
B: selfless.
C: quick to change.

15. bohemian *adj.* –

A: macho.
B: non-conformist.
C: argumentative.

APPEALING ATTRIBUTES

Charm and charisma are similarly attractive traits. **Charm** comes from the Latin *carmen*, meaning “song”, and is related to chant: a charmer magically enchants you. **Charisma** is even stronger; it comes from the Greek *charis*, meaning “grace” – a divine blessing, like a gift from the gods.

Answers

1. craven – [C] cowardly.
“How craven to ditch your date via a text message!”

2. picaresque – [A] like a daring rascal. “Dashiehl thinks wearing a cape makes him look more picaresque.”

3. recluse – [B] hermit.
“You’ve never heard of Lady Gaga? You must be a recluse.”

4. sanguine – [A] optimistic.
“After a month of driving lessons, I feel sanguine about passing the road test.”

5. choleric – [C] hot-tempered. “The choleric judge pounded his gavel so hard that it broke in half.”

6. congenial – [C] friendly.
“That wink suggests the bowler and the referee are too congenial.”

7. narcissist – [B] self-absorbed sort.
“What a narcissist, telling me every boring detail of his day!”

8. boeotian – [C] ignorant and dull.
“Patrick was as boeotian as a field full of under-achieving cows.”

9. acolyte – [A] follower.
“No, I’m not with the band. I’m just one of the acolytes.”

10. bon vivant – [C] lover of fine dining. “If you need me, I’ll be at the wine tasting with the other bon vivants.”

11. leggiadrous – [B] elegant and



graceful. “I told her she was leggiadrous, and that it was a compliment.”

12. venal –

[B] corruptible. “It’s clear from the parade fiasco that the organisers are a bunch of venal crooks.”

13. bumptious –

[A] pushy. “Becca only joined the choir because of her bumptious dad’s nagging.”

14. altruistic –

[B] selfless. “Piranhas are almost never

described as altruistic.”

15. bohemian – [B] non-conformist.
“Lulu’s bohemian friends introduced her to edgy performance art.”

ARE YOU ABOVE IT ALL?

Someone with a **supercilious** air is stuck-up. In Latin, *super* is “above” and *cilium* is “eyelash”, thus “eyebrow” is *supercilium* – and when an ancient Roman asserted superiority, it was with an arched eyebrow, a gesture familiar enough today. A **haughty** person is high or acts like it (being height-y).

VOCABULARY RATINGS

5 & below: Charming effort

6–10: Sagacious undertaking

11–12: Meticulous and marvellous

13–15: Word Power wizard

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